The Court of the great Mughuls

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To

My Parents

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Preface

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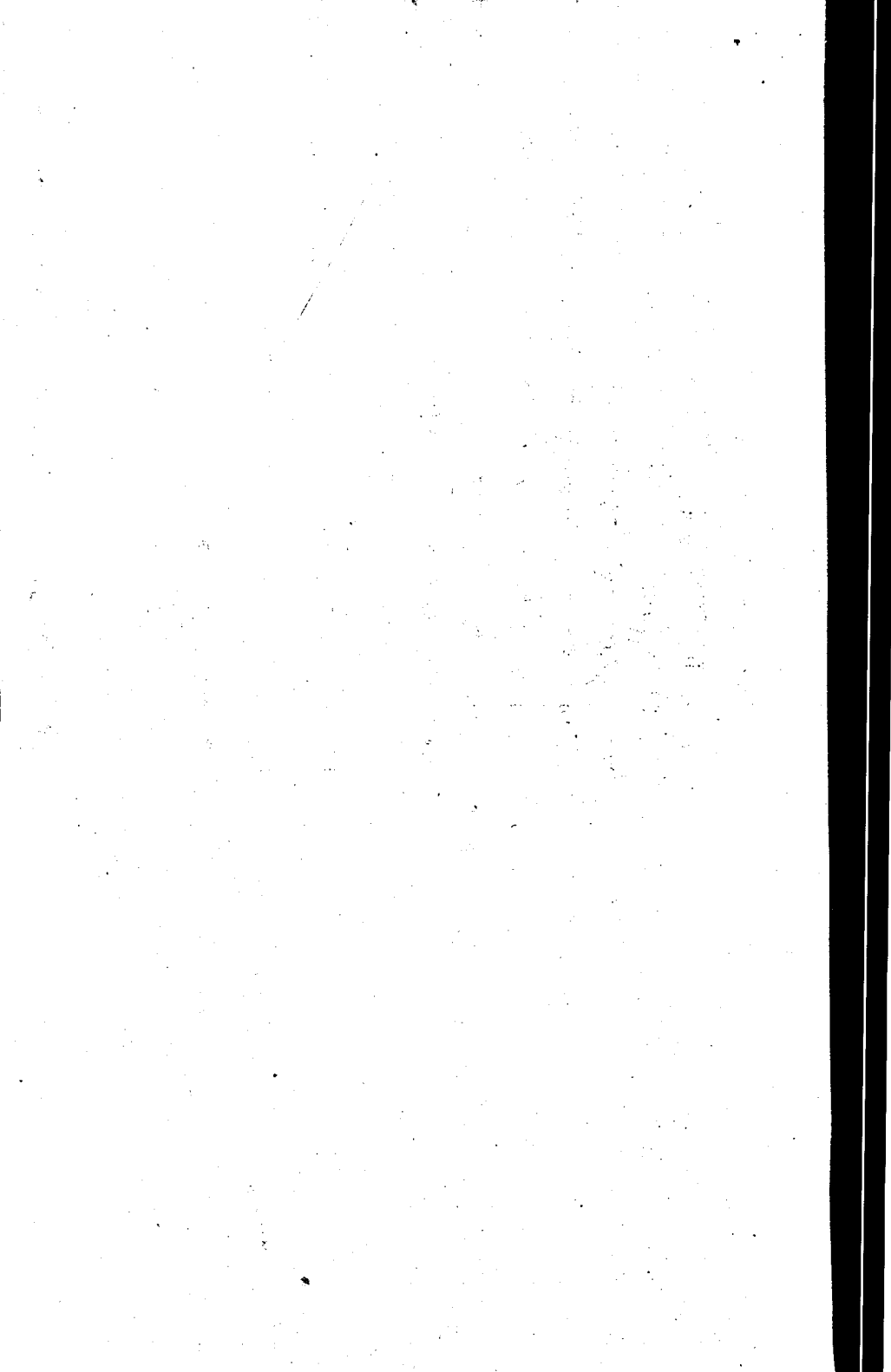
Chapter 1

Concept of Kingship

Kingship is one of the oldest institutions in history which has survived in spite of all vicissitudes of politics: civil wars, assassinations, deposition from throne, and overthrowing and beheading by adversaries. It emerged again and again from the debris of revolution and ashes of civil wars. Today, some kings are surviving after surrendering their powers and some of them are enjoying their old status because of absence of any challenge (1).

Historically, the institution passed through different stages and structured and re-structured itself according to its interest and fulfilling the demands of time. James Frazer in Golden Bough traces the origin of kingship in human society and how the king became the strongest person in the community. According to him the earliest position of a king was that of a magician; he was regarded as the most powerful man who had control over natural forces and was able to protect people from evil forces and natural calamities. This concept transformed him into a holy and sacred person and he was treated as god whose orders should be obeyed. To elevate his status, the magician-king posed as a son of the moon or the sun which were considered mysterious objects; to people (2) it was done to alienate himself from ordinary human beings and raise his status to that of a superhuman.

Following this model, the king of Peru regarded himself as the son of the Sun. People of Mexico worshipped their rulers as gods. From Sargon the First, ruler of Babylonia (3000BC) to the 4th dynasty rulers of

Ur, all claimed to be divine. Pharaohs of Egypt were recognised as gods by their subjects and to please them animals were sacrificed in their honour. They assumed not only full power but regarded themselves as the sole rulers of all the countries which were situated in the east as well as in the west. In Central India, there was a sect that believed that their ruler was the representative of Krishna or his reincarnation. Because of this belief they were ready to sacrifice their lives for him (3), In Manushastara, or the laws of Manu, the king was revered as god on earth (4).

Some historians, while discussing the evolution of the institution of king in the Mesopotamian civilisation, say that in the early period it was the responsibility of the king to provide food to his subjects. The situation changed when agriculture developed and peasants started to produce more and store it for their future consumption.

Under these circumstances, the new responsibility of the king was not only to defend his subjects from enemies but protect them from natural calamities as well. In this capacity, he became a representative of gods and deities to play a role of intermediary and communicate with divine powers for the welfare of his people (5). This transformation turned him sacred and he was respected as the highest authority by his subjects. It was believed that he possessed extra-ordinary qualities and therefore, was above other ordinary human beings. He was allowed all privileges and executed his authority as he liked.

This status alienated the king from the rest of the people. To keep his person divine and sacred he was isolated and no one was allowed to see him eating and drinking. His face was covered in order to protect him from the evil eye (6).

In ancient Persia, it was customary that whenever a person approached the king, he covered his eyes and said "I am burning" (7). The daily routine of the king was regulated and observed strictly (8). In the beginning, the

purpose of these traditions was to protect the king from evil forces but gradually they turned him into a superhuman being, different from other humans. On this basis, it was believed that the blood of a king was sacred and it should not drop onto the earth. Therefore, when a king was murdered, care was taken not to kill him by sword or stab him but to strangulate him in order not to shed his blood. Following this tradition, the Mongols killed kings. by wrapping them in a carpet and strangulating them. This is how Halaku Khan, the Mongol ruler, killed the last Abbasid Caliph after occupying Baghdad.

It was also believed that a king should not part with any element of his body because in this case he could become a victim of witchcraft. Believing this, the Frank kings did not have their hair cut and kept long hair. The Mongols also followed this custom. Consequently, long hair became a symbol of royalty. In the Carolingian dynasty, it was the custom that after a contest between different claimants to the throne, the successful candidate would cut the hair of his rivals in order to disqualify them to assume power.

As his position became high and sacred, the king was not allowed to walk bare footed. In his palace he walked on carpets and when he went out he used some conveyance. It was believed that the real name of a king should not be disclosed as it was an integral part of his body and soul; therefore it should be kept secret so that nobody could use magical powers against him. To protect him from evil and witchcraft, he was called by some other name. Perhaps this prohibition later on led to the assumption of titles (9).

Believing in the divinity of the king, people started to associate the prosperity of the country to his health. It was believed that if a king was disabled, it would affect the growth of population and fertility of the soil. In the early period, when the king became disabled or too old, he was

killed in order to save the community from disaster. In the later periods, he was deposed and deprived of power to rule over his people.

There are many examples in ancient India when such actions were taken against kings. Dharata Rashtriya was dethroned because he was blind. Rana Sanga, who had lost a limb or two in battles, although continued to rule, did not sit on the throne indicating his respect for the tradition (10). On the basis of this concept it was believed that a king possessed supernatural powers and therefore, was able to make the soil fertile for cultivation. Manushastarn mentions a number of qualities for a king. One of the important qualities was that he should rule with justice. In the rule of a just king, healthy children were born and people lived longer. From the writings of Homer, we find that at that time Greeks believed that a just king was a blessing to his people (11).

The emphasis on justice both in the East and the West indicates that society was divided into classes and the weaker section of the society needed protection from the higher authority. Justice was the basis of maintaining balance and harmony among the classes. Saint Patrick points out that during the reign of a just king, the weather remains pleasant, the sea becomes silent, more crops are produced and trees are full of fruits and flowers. In case of a despotic king, the country faces famine, drought and scarcity of wheat and fruit (12).

On the basis of this belief, the institution of kingship turned sacred and the person of the king became spiritually and temporally most powerful. To promote this image, temples were built in his honour and he was worshipped as god on earth (13) and people presented gifts to express their loyalty and devotion. Such was the faith in him that to think anything against the king was regarded a serious crime. Even if somebody dreamt of criticising or abusing the king or rebelling against him, it was considered

an unpardonable act. For example, in ancient Persia, General Gulshasp dreamt about rebelling against the king of Bahman dynasty. When his soldiers came to know about this they killed their general to show their loyalty to the king. In another event when a noble abused the king Ardsher, in his dream, he cut his tongue as punishment (14).

Keeping in view the divine position of kingship, the royal court was based on the model of a house of worship. The throne was placed on a platform at the end of a large hall, where the king sat majestically like a god, high above the others. Cleanliness, aroma of perfumes and complete silence transformed it into a sacred place. Courtiers stood silently with folded arms symbolising their obedience and loyalty. Like devotees they came to court in their best dress in order to pay homage to their superior. When they approached the throne, they kissed either the king's hand, foot, or corner of the throne to express their devotion and faith in him.

Modes of homage reflected the divine status of the king. In ancient Persia, nobody was allowed to kiss the king's foot without permission. Some courtiers insisted on kissing his hand, some his clothes, and some a corner of the throne which was a great honour to those who were allowed to perform it (15).

During the Sassanid period, the court used to be held in a large hall whose floor was covered with beautiful soft carpets. Curtains were hung on some parts of the walls, while the rest were decorated with paintings. At the end of the hall, behind a curtain, the king sat on the throne dressed in grand garments, while the courtiers stood in their assigned places; when the curtain was drawn the courtiers found themselves in a state of awe by the grandeur of his appearance.

It was customary for courtiers to cover their face when they entered the court in order not to pollute the

sacredness of the hall. When a courtier approached the throne, he prostrated in front of the king and remained in this position until permitted to stand. After that, he bowed before the king and paid homage. If he had to address the king, he first recited his pompous titles and then conveyed his message.

There were three groups of courtiers. First were princes and high nobles, then were advisors and companions, third were singers, musicians, entertainers, and jokers. People belonging to the lower caste such as weavers or barbers were not allowed to come in the presence of the king. Disabled persons were also not permitted to attend court (16).

There were different modes of paying homage to the king. One was to salute him by stretching the arm with closed fist (like the Nazis) (17). In another, both hands were put under arm pits and homage was paid by bowing in front of him; the purpose was to protect the king from any probable attack (18) In another mode, the palm of one's hand was put on the mouth to express amazement or wonder on seeing the king (19). All these rituals and ceremonies heightened the status of the king and made him seen as sacred or divine. It made his position so strong that to rebel against him or to challenge his orders was tantamount to serious crime. Consequently, it led to the establishment of the institution on solid basis.

There were certain symbols and privileges which were reserved only for kings. One of them was the right to sit on the throne. Rulers, to show their glory, would build special thrones which were studded with diamonds and pearls. Some thrones were made of ivory, adorned with beautiful designs; a product of excellent craftsmanship. In India, the royal seat was known as sanghasan or seat of the lion. It was covered either with lion or tiger skin.

The second symbol of a king was his crown. The tradition of wearing a crown originated from Persia, (20)

and there were many names for this royal emblem in the ancient Persian language. For example, it was known as afsar (af means high and sar means head). Diham or diadem and tiyar or tiara is also words that mean crown. In ancient Persia, the king had a special crown built for himself. It was big in size and decorated with diamonds, pearls and precious stones. As it was too heavy for the king to wear, it was suspended over the throne by means of a chain and when the king sat he simply inserted his head under it. When the curtain was drawn, the courtiers were impressed to see (21) their king with such a huge crown on his head. Thus, throne and crown both became sacred symbols of royalty.

The third emblem of kingly power was asa or the staff. It symbolised the ruler's power to crush rebellion and restore peace and discipline. Among the Romans a bunch of sticks indicated the concept of power and authority to mete out punishment. In ancient India 'danda mati' was a means to enforce strict rules and regulations and punish those who created trouble. Even in modern Britain, the ruler is handed over a staff at the coronation ceremony as a symbol of authority. In modern days, the baton of the field martial is the continuity of this concept.

The fourth symbol of kingship was the ring. R. N. Frey, in his article 'Charisma of Kingship in Ancient Iran' points out that the ring symbolised a contract between the gods and the king. The art of the Achamaenid and Sassanid's period often shows gods bestowing rings to kings (22). The ring represented the authority of the king as it was used instead of his signature on state documents. When the king gave his ring to a minister or some close associate it meant that he bestowed his authority to this person.

Besides these symbols there were other privileges which were reserved for the king. One of these privileges was issuance of coins at the time of his coronation. These

were inscribed with his name, titles, date of succession to throne and some religious quotation. The tithe coins of the Sassanid kings depicted his image along with his name and titles on one side and the Zoroastrian religious fireplace (23) on the other.

When a king adopted a title at the time of his crowning ceremony, care was taken to select such titles which showed his allegiance to religion, followed by titles which indicated his personal qualities, his power and his rule over vast territories. For example, the Sassanid ruler's title ran as, 'One who has thousand qualities', 'One who has thousand slaves' and 'Majestic ruler' (24).

It was the tradition that the ruler should not appear too often in public, thus he retained an air of mystery. His invisibility was a great source of his strength. However, whenever he decided to appear, special care was taken to impress people. He was surrounded by his armed guards, high ranking nobles and courtiers. People came out in huge numbers to watch the royal procession.

Those who rebelled or intrigued against the king were punished severely, and in public, in order to serve as a warning to others. Either they were torn from limb to limb or hanged or thrown to hungry lions and tigers. Sometimes their dead bodies were left hanging or taken around the city to strike terror in the hearts of the common people. These tactics gave the king an air of supreme power.

It was the tradition for every king to build a new palace for his residence to inaugurate a new era. Old palaces were abandoned and left without repair or maintenance. As it was customary for the king to award his courtiers, nobles and ambassadors gifts and robes of honour and distribute charity among poor and disabled persons, it was essential that his treasury should remain full. His main sources of revenue were agriculture, taxes, war booty and gifts and cash presented to him by nobility. Thus, the grandeur of the king was at the cost of the people's poverty

and misery. The people made unending sacrifices and remained poor so that their king could reign in glory.

In Islam, the concept of kingship derived from Byzantine and Persian traditions after the conquest of Syria, Iraq and Iran. Although the Umayyad dynasty kept most of the Arab tribal values and customs, at the same time they adopted Byzanitine traditions related to administration and court ceremonies (25). The radical change in the concept of kingship occurred when the Abbasid Revolution achieved success after overthrowing the Umayyad rule. As it was supported by the Iranians, they influenced the structure of kingship so it was based on ancient the Iranian model.

Ma'mun (813-833) was Iranian from his mother 's side and his minister up to 818, Fadl b.Suhail , was also Irani and before conversion to Islam was a follower of Zoroastrian religion. Therefore, the Iranian nobility, which acquired a high position at the court, introduced their traditions to the Abbasid court (26). As a result of this, ancient Sassand's court etiquette and ceremonies (27) were accepted with enthusiasm.

The Iranian influence created a reaction among the Ulema who wanted to implement the Sharia or the Islamic system which undermined the authority of the Caliph and gave them an opportunity to play a leading role in the affairs of government. On the other hand, the Iranian nobility wanted to transform the Caliphate into a model of the Sassanid emperor all powerful and authoritative (28). Under this system the bureaucrats and government officials has the chance to assume power in the shadow of the Caliph. Both parties came into conflict with each other in order to change the instituaton of the Caliphate according to their ideologies; the Ulema attempted to establish the supremacy of the sharia and reduce the authority of the ruler while the Iranian group endeavoured to make the Caliph all powerful with unlimited authority. Surprisingly,

both parties were successful in achieving their objective. It was accepted that the Caliph had no authority to change or amend the sharia, however, he could use unlimited power in administrative matters and in the affairs of government.

The result of this compromise was that, though the Muslim rulers declared their allegiance to religion and recongnised the supremacy of Sharia, in practice they violated it whenever there was a conflict of interest. They never allowed it to inferfere in their administration or in promotion of their personal glory.

When the Abbasid caliphate declined and new independent states emerged in the eastern part of the Caliphate, these rulers revived the ancient Iranian traditions and institutions. The ruling dynasties of Samanid, Ziyarid, and Buid associated themselves with ancient Iranian dynasties in order to legitimise their rule (29).

This attempt showed that in Central Asia and Iran, people were still under the spell of ancient Iranian culture and civilisation and believed that individuals belonging to the ancient royal families were endowed by a royal light (far) which distinguished them from others(30). Therefore, the newly emerging dynasties enthusiastically revived the Iranian model of kingship, established traditional administrative institutions and introduced ancient court ceremonies to gain acceptance as the inheritors of the past. They revived all the traditions of royal titles, modes of homage, etiquette, processions, bestowal of robe of honour and cash awards, distribution of charity among poor, patronisation of poets who composed panegyric poetry in their honour, building monuments and tombs to remind coming generations of their death. All these efforts were made to deepen the loyalty among people and inmortalise their dynastic rule.

The Irani model of kingship suited these rulers because it provided them unlimited power and unchallenged authority. When this model was consolidated,

the Muslim jurists had no alternative but to justify it according to the teachings of Islam. The Saljuqi wazir, Nizamul Mulk Tusi, in his book Siyastnama writes that God creates a person n each period who has royal qualiites and who looks after his subjects. God, through him, averts chaos and natural calamities. He consolidates his grandeur in order that people can live under his just rule in peace (31).

Ibn Khaldun also justifies kingship on the basis that, as human nature is evil, and always tends to create trouble and usurp the rights of others. Kingship is the only way to check these tendenencies. As the king is powerful enough to overpower conflicts and maintain order in society (32).He should be recongnised as rightful ruler.

On the basis of these theories, the king derived his authority directly from God and came to be regarded as Zill-i-llajhi or shadow of God. This made the King into a powerful and sacred being. To criticise or to rebel against him was a heinous crime. Thus the Muslim jurists gave religious sanction to the office of kingship and advised people to remain loyal to their rulers.

Once the concept of the divinity of kingship took root in the minds of the people, and the king came to be recognised as the shadow of God, or His representative on earth, it became a common practice to kiss his feet, hand or dress and bow and prostrate in front of him.

Hilal al Sabi, in his book Rusum dar al Khilafa, portrays the rituals at the Abbasid court. According to him, the Caliph would sit on a throne which was placed on a high platform and the courtiers would kiss his hand which was covered by a cloth. The courtiers were not allowed to speak without permission, and if the Caliph asked someone a question, he replied in such a low voice that only the Caliph could hear. If somebody spoke loudly, he was expelled from the court.

While speaking, a person was not supposed to move his body and, while in presence of the Caliph, the courtiers stood quietly and did not look around. They were not allowed to make any sign or move from their reserved seats; on leaving the court, they did not turn their backs towards the Caliph. Laughing, coughing and scratching were regarded as serious offences against court etiquette (33).

The grandeur of the Abbasid court was displayed in 880 AD when the Fatimid ambassador visited Baghdad and attended the court. The courtiers stood silently in rows while the Caliph was behind curtains; when the curtains were drawn, the Caliph was revealed sitting on the throne surrounded by armed guards. In front of him was the copy of the Holy Quran belonging to the third Caliph, Hazrat Usman. He wore the aba, similar to the gown of the Holy Prophet (PUH) and carried the asa or staff and sword of the Prophet. The Fatimid ambassador was amazed and cried, "What is all this? Is he God?" (34).

The introduction of Iranian ceremonies and the celebration of Persian festivals provided a touch of glamour to court life. Thus, even un-Islamic traditions such as celebrating nauroz (new year's festivals) and mihrjjan (autumn festival), assuming high titles, keeping harems, employing eunuchs, constructing palaces and tombs, enjoying wine parties, patronising the arts, employing astrologers, awarding robes of honour, wearing silken and gold embroidered dresses, eating from gold vessels and playing polo and chess were all adopted by most of the Muslim rulers with pride.

In Iranian tradition, rulers used to hold court regularly in order to provide access to the common people who sought justice for their grievances (35). This practice was also adopted by Muslim rulers. Darbar (court) literally means to present someone at the gate of the royal palace. The gate had significance in the eyes of the people because

it was the centre of political and administrative activities where all decisions and policies were made under the supervision of the ruler.

Under the Ottoman Empire, bab-i-A'li or sublime Porte was the place where all administrative matters were discussed and settled. Therefore, the importance of the royal gate was so great that members of high nobility were posted to guard it. The second term which was used for court was bargah. Among the Turks, Khan, the supreme leader, held his court in a large tent which was known as bargah. The term was later on also used for court.

Nizamul Mulk in Siyasatnama mentions the rules and regulations of holding court. He advises the king that, in order to maintain the grandeur and glory of court, it is necessary to have two hundred tall, handsome armed men around him. Four thousand foot soldiers should also be posted in order to create awe and fear among courtiers. Slaves, wearing expensive dress and equipped with weapons, should stand around the throne. Homage must be paid to the king according to the status of the audience. First should be members of the royal family, then high ranking nobility, and, in the end, common people. Care should be taken not to mix high and low. He further advises that the king should allow courtiers to pay homage regularly, otherwise they would feel deprived (36).

Muslim thinkers and jurists justified Iranian traditions and ceremonies by arguing that it was difficult for a ruler to rule over his subjects by following Sharia. Ziauddin Barani, the historian of the Tughlaq period, justifies all the trappings and traditions of royalty, such as the throne, crown, prostration in front of the king, etc. as a requirement for absolute rule. The king's right to build grand palaces, spend the state's money on personal use, wear lavish garments and jewellery, award the death penalty in order to protect his rule, keep harems, etc., are all legitimate acts because when God bestows power on a

person and makes him superior to other folk, he has the [illegible]t to raise his status and act beyond ordinary moral values.

According to Barani, it was necessary for both the ruler and his nobles to live a glamorous life. Only by having these powers would the ruler be able to protect the sanctity of the Holy Quran, assert the superiority of Islam and defend religious teachings (37). Thus, Muslim rulers continued to emulate ancient Iranian traditions which helped their absolute rule. In practice they did not allow sharia to interfere in their authority. In fact, they kept religion and politics completely separate.

Babur and Humayun, the early Mughul rulers, did not get enough time to create a definite concept of kingship. Both faced adversity at the court, lost their throne and were forced to roam helplessly, supported only by a small band of loyal followers, as some of their closest nobles betrayed them in their hour of need. Under these circumstances, it was not possible to establish and maintain certain court etiquettes and the ceremonies to go with them.

After ascending the throne, Humayun, who had an innovative mind, introduced a few rituals and ceremonies to make his court more glamorous. This obviously came to a halt when he lost the throne and was forced into exile. His tragic, untimely death soon after his restoration, prevented him from resuming this tradition. Therefore, it was Akbar who consolidated the Mughul Empire and stabilised the institution of kingship.

Abul Fadl (1602) provided the philosophical basis for Mughul kingship by exalting the position and emphasising the importance of royalty. Royalty, according to him, is the highest dignity in the eyes of God and is a light which emanates from Him. Thus Abul Fadl calls royalty 'the divine light'. According to him, this light creates paternal love for his subjects in the heart of the king and increases his trust in God.

Abul Fadl divides kings into two categories: true and selfish. Both types of kings possess the same ruling institutions treasury, army, servants, and subjects but they distinguish themselves by their attitudes. A true king uses these institutions for the welfare of his subjects. According to Abul Fadl, all actions of the true king are divine, and therefore are to be accepted by the people without question.

The court ceremonies and administrative traditions in India developed from the Ghaznavids, who had taken them from the Samanids. The Samanid rulers not only adopted the pattern of the Abbasid rulers but revived some of the older Sassanid traditions as well. The Mughul rulers of India inherited these court ceremonies and administrative traditions through the Sultans of Delhi and added some Changizi traditions to them. The contemporary Persian influence came through the number of nobles who had migrated from Iran to India. The participation of Rajput princes in the Mughul government led to the adoption of Indian dress and some other customs and practices.

These court ceremonies which included prostration (sijda), kissing of ground (zaminbus), and kissing of feet (pabus) elevated the status of the king. Akbar also liberated kingship from the clutches of ulema when he issued Mahzr, a decree signed by all leading ulema authorising the king to interpret religion. This made the Mughul king all powerful and deprived the ulema of their authority as the custodians of religious affairs. The king was no longer bound to follow sharia. Instead, the ulema now came under his control and he could make them issue fatwas according to his wishes. Even Aurangzeb, who was a religious man, asked them to issue such fatwas which allowed him to fulfil his schemes and plans. Thus, ulema became subservient to the king.

Moreover, Akbar declared himelf the king of all his subjects irrespective of religion, caste, and creed. The result was the development of a composite culture which integrated all his subjects socially and culturally.

The Mughul rulers made efforts to keep in contact with their subjects, for which the institution of Hall of Public Audience was established, where the king was accessible to the public. The tradition of Jharoka darshan or appearance on the balcony to give audience to common people brought him closer to his subjects. It made the Mughul kingship appear benevolent. Such was the powerful impact of the divine kingship that even when the Mughul dynasty declined and the emperor lost most of his power, the loyalty and devotion of the people towards the king did not wane. During the brief period when a group of nobles played the role of kingmakers, they did not dare to exclude the dynasty and usurp kingship.

The Marhattas and the East India Company, in spite of their authority, ruled in the name of the Mughul king. His popularity was evident when, in 1857, the rebel soldiers stormed the Red Fort to help him fight against the Company's rule. The charisma of divine kingship came to an end as a result of the Mughul defeat in 1857.

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Chapter 2

The Symbols of Royalty and the Emperor's Prerogatives

The throne, the allegiance to the sovereign in the Khutba, the assumption of royal titles, the issue of new coins, the inscription of name and titles on the royal seal, were the symbols of royalty during the Mughul period in India. The new emperor, after his succession, sat on the throne, assumed high and pompous titles, caused his name to be read in the Khutba, struck his name and titles on the seal, and issued a farman (royal patent) proclaiming himself the emperor. If there were more than one claimant to the throne, all tried to fulfil these conditions and to be recognized as the legal ruler. In this event, only power and diplomatic manoeuvring decided the issue. Shahjahen throne through the diplomacy of Asaf Khan (d.1641)(1) and Alamgir (1658-1707) won his throne through his victory over Dara Shukhu (d.1659)(2).

As these were the symbols of royalty, nobody else in the kingdom was allowed to use them. To sit on the throne was a royal prerogative: princes, as provincial governors, sometimes were allowed to sit on a throne but its height must not be above 3 feet (3). To have his name read in the khutba and to strike new coins were purely royal prerogatives and any violation of them was regarded as high treason against the sovereignty of the reigning monarch. Banners and military standards were awarded to the princes and high nobles for their meritorious services. The signet-ring or royal seal remained in the personal

possession of the emperor or was entrusted for safe keeping to the lady of the harem or to a trusted noble.

Beside these symbols, there were other royal prerogatives which were jealously guarded by the emperor.

The Throne (4)

The throne was the symbol of royalty, and to sit on it was a proclamation of kingship. The occupant of the throne was regarded as a lawful ruler in the eyes of the people. It was a symbolic expression of royalty to sit on a high and significant place. After the succession of a new emperor, the most elaborate ceremony was that of coronation. The new emperor ascended the throne as a successor to royalty. He was not invested with sovereign power by any religious authority.

The height of the Mughul throne was 3 feet from the grounds (5) and it had a canopy which was held by four pillars (6). A cover of gold brocade was laid on the throne when the emperor sat on it. He used to sit either with crossed legs or with legs folded (do-zanu) (7). His weapons, including his sword, shield, bow, quiver, and arrows, were put on one side of the throne (8).

There was no special design of throne necessary for the coronation of Mughul emperors. The greatest of them all, Akbar, was crowned on a throne of bricks placed upon an earthen platform. It was 18 feet long and 3 feet high.

The emperor used to sit on the throne on all other occasions of celebration. Each time a special throne was brought and placed in its proper place. On Nauruz, Muslim Festivals (Ids), the Weighing Ceremony and on other occasions, special thrones were made to add to the grandeur of the spectacle.

Every emperor made different thrones according to his taste and liking. They were made of massive gold, studded with diamonds and other precious stones of various colours. The shape and form of the thrones were different.

"The Aurang or throne", says Abu'l-Fadl, "is made of several forms; some are inlaid with precious stones, and others are made of gold, silver etc"(9)

When the emperor travelled or went on a long journey, the royal thrones were carried along with him (10).

Most of the foreign travellers who visited the Mughul court observed with interest and curiosity the thrones of the Mughul emperors. "In the middle of this court", writes Thomas Roe(1615-1619),"was a throne of mother of Pearle borne on two Pilla(r)s raysed on earth, couered with a high tent, the Pole headed with a knob of gould, under foote Carpets"(11). Terry saw a throne in the palace of Agra, "on the top of which are four lions made of massive silver, gilded, set with precious stones, supporting a canopie of massive gold"(12).

Tavernier (who visited the Mughul court from 1665 to 1667) in one place reports on five thrones which were covered with diamonds and, "are displayed in such a manner that they form a cross". In another place he writes about seven thrones, "one wholly covered with diamonds, the others with rubies, emeralds or pearls". He also saw two small thrones: one of oval shape, about 7 feet in length and 5 in breadth, its outside covered with diamonds, but having no canopy; the other was with a canopy, a back, a bolster and counterpane, "all of which are covered with diamonds"(13). Manucci observed three cushions on the throne: a large one, which served as support to the back, and two other square ones, one on each side, as well as a lovely mattress(14). Ogilby and Mandelslo, too, mentioned the thrones of massive gold, inlaid with precious stones(15).

The zenith of the Mughul empire was displayed in the Peacock throne (1635) (takht-i-ta'us)(16), which expressed the perfection and sublimity of Mughul artistic ideas, and represented the grandeur, richness, and charm of the personality of the emperor and the greatest achievement

of the jeweller's art in India. Its beauty dazzled the eyes of spectators and stunned foreign travellers. Many of them left an interesting account of this masterpiece."Throne of massive Gold with its Peacock", writes Thevenot, "so much talked in the Indies ... it is said to be worth of twenty Millions of Gold: but who knows the value thereof?"(17).

Tavernier left a detailed account of the throne, which is worthy, of note:

...that is to say, it is about 6 feet long and 4 wide. Upon the four feet, which are very massive, and from 20 to 25 inches high, are fixed the four bars which supported the base of the throne, and upon these bars are ranged twelve columns, which face the court being open? Both the feet and the bars, which are more than 18 inches long, are covered with gold inlaid and enriched with numerous diamonds, rubies, and emeralds. In the middle of each bar there is a large belass ruby, cut en cabuchon, with four emeralds round it, forming a square cross. Next in succession from one side to the other along the length of the bars there are similar crosses, arranged so that in one the ruby is in the middle of four emeralds, and the intervals between the rubies and emeralds are covered with diamonds, the largest of which does not exceed 10 to 12 carats in weight, all showy stones, but very flat. There also in some parts pearls set in gold, and upon one of the longer sides of the throne are four steps to ascend it. Of the three cushions or pillows which are upon the throne, that which is placed behind the Emperor's back is larger and round like one of our bolsters, and the two other placed at his sides are flat. Moreover a sword, a mace, a round shield, a bowl and quiver with arrows are suspended from the throne".(18).

About the diamonds and precious stones studded in the throne he writes:

I counted the large belass rubies on the great throne, and there are about 108, all cabuchons, the least of which weighs apparently 200 and more. As far as the emeralds,

there are plenty of good clolour, but they have many flaws; the largest may weigh 60 carats, and the least 30 carats. I counted about 116; thus there are many more emeralds than rubies(19).

He valued the price of the throne as 107,000,000 rupees(20).

After the death of an emperor, mourning was observed for a week or a few days, and the new ruler held his coronation soon after. The throne was not declared unoccupied, because an unoccupied throne was tempting to ambitious persons. It created a sense of insecurity and might put the country into disorder and chaos. The death of the emperor, for this reason, was not announced immediately, but only when his successor was there to sit on the throne.

The death of Babur was not announced until the arrival of Humayun from his fief (jagir) of Sambhal(21). When Humayun died in an accident, Akbar was not present in the capital. He did not have time to move from the Panjab to the capital. Therefore, the death of the emperor was not disclosed immediately. Meanwhile it was decided to disguise a person as Humayun and present him before the people to assure them that the emperor was alive and healthy. This ruse was suggested by Amir al-Bahr Ali Rais (d.1572)(22), from Turkey, who happened to be at the Court at this time. During this interval the news was hurriedly conveyed to Akbar, and he was immediately proclaimed emperor at Kalanur (23).

The new ruler sat on the throne in the presence of the nobility, the 'ulama', and members of the royal family. It was not compulsory for tributary rulers to attend the coronation. If there were several claimants to the throne, each one tried to win the favour of nobles who commanded military power. In the succession of Jahangir, Shahjahan, and Alamgir, the various different groups of nobility played a decisive role.

The ceremony of coronation could take place anywhere, although it usually took place at thė capital. When Akbar succeeded to the throne, he was far away from his capital and had no time to get there. It was decided, therefore, to celebrate his coronation on the spot. Though the ceremony was poor and simple, it served its purpose.

On the occasion of a coronation, the court and palace were decorated. Poets recited newly composed panegyric odes (Qasida), and fireworks added to the amusement of the people at night. Banquets were held and there were free distributions of food to the people gathered to celebrate the coronation.

The emperor bestowed titles, robes of honour, and jagirs (fiefs) on his nobles. Promotions were granted and new appointments of ministers and high officials were made. Valuable and rich gifts were awarded to members of the royal family and nobility. The nobles of the court and tributary Rajas, through their representatives (Wakil). presented their gifts (Pishkash) to the emperor on the occasion(24). Mughul emperors never marred their coronation celebration with the execution of their opponents.

To provide a glimpse into the magnificence and glamour of the Mughul coronation celebrations, we give here accounts of the coronations of Shahjahan and Alamgir.

Shahjahan ascended to the throne, after the time had been fixed by court astrologers, 3 1/2 gharis after sun rise(25). The ceremony of takht-nashini (accession to the throne) took place in the Hall of Public Audience. Nobles, at this occasion, presented nadhr(26) to the emperor, which was distributed among the people of the capital. The celebration was followed by entertainment: singers, musicians, and dancing girls provided gaiety and merriment. The court poets recited their qasidas and chronograms. The entertainments were followed by awards of gifts. Nobles, sayyids, poets, musicians, and astrologers

were generously awarded. Mumtaz Mahall (27) sent trays of gold as Nithar(28). When the emperor went into the harem, the ladies of the harem expressed their joy. Mumtaz Mahall showered gold and silver as Nithar (money which is thrown to the poor people on festive occasions) and offered to the emperor as a present (pishkash) precious stones and diamonds. Other ladies offered their presents according to their rank. The emperor, in return, bestowed gifts on the royal family; to Mumtaz Mahall were given 2 lakh ashrafis (coins of gold) and 6 lakh of rupees (coins of silver), to Jahanara(29) one lakh ashrafis and four lakh rupees; eight lakh rupees were given to Mumtaz Mahall to distribute among her children. Daily allowances were fixed for the princes: Dara Sikuh, one thousand rupees, Shahshuja(30) seven hundred and fifty rupees; Aurangzeb five hundred rupees; and Murad(31) two hundred and fifty rupees. Nobles were given titles and awards; Mahabat Khan (32) was given the title of Khankhgngn (the Lord of Lords) and promoted to the post of Mir Bakhshi(33). He was awarded one lakh rupees as a gift. Wazir Khan was promoted to the mansab of Panj-Hazari(34) with a gift of one lakh rupees. Beside these a number of other nobles were promoted and rewarded. The celebrations continued for nearly twenty-two days, till Asaf Khan came from Lahore with Dara Shikuh Shahshuja, and Aurangzeb. He was allowed to come in the Jharoka (balcony) and kiss the feet of the emperor. He was appointed Wakil-i-Saltanat(35) and the signet ring was given to him on the request of Mumtaz Mahall. Those nobles, who came with Asaf Khan, were rewarded in recognition of their services(36).

Alamgir's coronation celebrations were more elaborate than those of the other rulers(37). It was the period when the Mughul Empire was in full bloom. On this occasion Aywan-i-chihil sutun and the hall of Public Audience (Diwan-i-Amm) were decorated; a square place was prepared in the centre and here was placed the famous

Peacock Throne with golden railings around it. On both sides of the throne there were jewelled chatrs (umbrellas). Two golden thrones were placed on either side of it, and behind it were placed golden chairs upon which were deposited the Qur(38), consisting of the personal weapons of the emperor, swords, shields, and spears.

The Ghusulkhana(39) was also profusely decorated. Small tents of different colours were decorated in the court yard of the hall, and on the floor beautiful carpets of Kirman were laid down(40).

This was followed by the bestowal of gifts and awards; Roshanara(41) was given five lakh rupees, Zaib al-Nisa(42) four lakh rupees, and Badr al-Nisa(43) one lakh and six thousand rupees. Princes also received their share: Sultan Muhammad(44) three lakh rupees; Muhammad Muazzam(45) two lakh; Muhammad Azam(46) two lakh; and Muhammad Akbar(47) one lakh rupees(48).

Ambassadors, if present at the time of the coronation, used to present to the emperor "whatever was most rare in their respective countries"(49). At the coronation of Alamgir the ambassadors from Uzbeg Khans, the Sharif of Mecca the king of Yemen, and the king of Ethiopia were present(50).

The coronation was not only celebrated in the capital but throughout the empire(51).

After the celebration, proclamations were sent to every province and friendly country announcing the succession of the new emperor(52). Such Farmans (royal patent) were stamped by the signet-ring of the emperor and were read out publicly throughout the empire(53).

At the time of his coronation the new emperor issued important Farmans (royal patent) announcing changes in the administration or introducing new reforms, in order to gain the confidence and popularity of the public. The abolition of unpopular laws was regarded as an auspicious beginning for a reign. Reforms and good

changes in the administration perpetuated the memory of a coronation in the hearts of the people. Jahangir, at the time of his coronation, issued twelve ordinances announcing social, political, and legal reforms(54). Shahjahan's first order was for the abolition of the prostration ceremony (sajda), which was regarded as irreligious(55). By doing this he obtained the confidence of the orthodox nobility at the court and the general popularity of the public. Alamgir, after his succession issued ordinances ordering that the Islamic Creed (Kalima) should not be inscribed on coins, because they were handled without respect by the non-Muslims(56). He introduced the Hijra Era in the official record(57), abolished the celebration of Nauruz, and put restrictions on the sale of intoxicants(58).

The Khutba

In the beginning of Islam the Khutba was recited twice after the succession of the new caliph. The first khutba was the inaugural address delivered by the new caliph announcing his policy and the second was the proclamation of the new ruler in which his name and titles were recited before the congregation in all Friday mosques throughout the Muslim World. The tradition of the first khutba was started by the first Muslim Caliph, Abu Bakr, (632-637), who, after his election, pledged in his inaugural address to rule according to the Qur'an and Traditions. The practice was continued by his successors, the Umayyad and some Abbasid Caliphs. It was discontinued on the assumption of autocratic rule by the Abbasids. It was then that the second khutba substituted the first and became one of the symbols of Muslim Royalty(60).

As long as the Abbasids remained strong their names were recited in the khutba throughout the Muslim World. But with the decline of their power and the recognition of independent Muslim rulers on their part, the situation changed. The recognition of sovereignty was

conferred on the condition that the name of the Caliph and the ruler should be recited in the khutba. The occupation of Baghdad by the Buyids (945) and their usurpation of the Caliph's powers put the Muslim rulers in an awkward position. To acknowledge the Caliphate meant recognising the superiority of the Buyids, which on political and religious grounds, was abhorrent to most of the Muslim dynasties. The Samanids, who were rivals of the Buyids, on these grounds refused to acknowledge Muti (946-976) as the Caliph. They, however, found a new way to maintain their relations with the Caliphate in order to legitimize their rule. They continued to pay homage to Mustakfi (945-946), who was deposed by the Buyids, recited his name in the khutba, and inscribed it on coins, even after his death in 949. This helped the other Muslim rulers, who, whether for political or personal reasons, did not like the present Caliph; and they recited the name of the dead Caliph in the Khutba and inscribed it on coins to show their allegiance to the Caliphate.

The conversion of the Mongols into Islam brought another dimension to this concept. Considering themselves politically stronger, they refused to acknowledge the Abbasid Caliphate in Egypt, which was nothing but a shadow under the Mamluks (1250-1517). To provide a base for the legitimacy of their rule, they started to recite the names of the four Orthodox Caliphs, in the case of Sunni, or twelve Imams, in the case of Shia, in the khutba(61).

The Mughul emperors, who inherited this tradition from their predecessors, continued it in India. After the ceremony of coronation (Takht-Nashini), the name of the new emperor was recited in the khutba on the first Friday after the coronation, before a Muslim congregation. It was regarded as an official and religious proclamation and as recognition on the part of the people of the country. The khutba was composed of praise of God, the Prophet and the four orthodox Caliphs: names of the former rulers(62) were

recited and the name of the new ruler was added and recited for the first time thus: "O God, bless the ruler of the age (his name and titles were announced) and make him kind and favourable to his people". It was repeated on every Friday in every mosque and on the occasion of Id al-Fitr and Id al-adha throughout the empire(63). The recital of the name of the new emperor in the khutba was a dignified ceremony. The new emperor went to the Friday mosque along with the princes and nobles for Friday prayer, and joined the Muslim congregation like an ordinary worshipper. When the Imam started to recite the khutba, he was awarded a robe of honour after each name of the emperor's predecessors from Amir Timur; when he recited the name of the new emperor, he was given a golden robe of honour(64).

If some noble and his supporters caused his name or that of someone other than the ruling emperor to be recited in the khutba, it was an open rebellion against the ruling emperor and treason to the state. Khan Zaman and Baba Khan Qaqshal, in Oudh and Bengal respectively, had the name of Mirza Hakim (d. 1585), younger brother of Akbar, recited in the khutba.

Akbar dealt with these rebels with an iron hand and encompassed their destruction(65).

Provincial Muslim states, which had risen in Bengal, Gujrat, and the Deccan before the advent of the Mughuls, were required to recite the name of the Mughul emperor in the khutba on Fridays and at Id prayers, this being considered an open recognition of Mughul sovereignty.

In the states of Hindu Rajas, who offered their allegience to the Mughul emperors and accepted them as their Sovereign Lord, the name of the Mughul emperor was recited in the khutba on Fridays in every mosque throughout their states.

The Sikka

The regular practice of inscribing the name of the ruler on coins was established by the Abbasid Caliphs(66). Henceforth it became the tradition that every new ruler, after his succession, inscribed his name on new coins.

Every Mughul emperor, after his succession, issued new coins. They bore his name and titles on one side, and some verses in his praise, or the Islamic Creed (Kalima) or Quranic verses, or the names of the four orthodox Caliphs, on the other side(67). For instance the golden coins issued at the time of Alamgir's coronation (1658) had the following couplet inscribed on them:

سکہ زد در جہاں چوں مہر منیر　　شاہ اورنگ زیب عالمگیر

Aurangzeb (throne-adorning) Alamgir struck the coins in the world like the dazzling sun.
The same couplet with minor changes was struck on silver coins as follows:

سکہ زد در جہاں چوں بدر منیر　　شاہ اورنگ زیب عالمگیر

Aurangzeb (throne-adorning) Alamgir struck the coins in the world like the silvery moon(68).

The coronation coins were struck on a large scale. A large number of such coins has survived and show the case and form of the coins which the Mughul emperors struck at the time of their coronation.

The coronation coins were issued in large numbers from different mints of the Empire. Of these coins, more were struck in silver than in gold. Silver coins were distributed among the people while gold coins were given to nobles as gifts in memory of the coronation(69).

Royal Seals

The royal seal was the insignia of sovereignty. The prophet had a seal which was inherited by Abu Bakr (632-634) and Umar (634-644) as an insignia of sovereignty. When it was lost by the third Caliph, Uthman, (644-665) the Muslim Caliphs were deprived of one of the relics of the prophet. But each Caliph had his own seal which was prepared after his succession. It consisted of the name and titles of the Caliph and some favourite motto(70). The Abbasid's started the practice of entrusting the seal to the wazir as a sign of authority and confidence.

At the time of his coronation, the Mughul emperor's name and titles were inscribed in the centre of the seal, while those of his predecessors were written in the margin. It was used instead of a signature(71) and was stamped on all imperial documents. Akbar's seal contained eight circles in the margin, while Jahangir, after his succession, added another circle for Akbar's name, and his own name and titles were inscribed in the centre(72). This great royal seal was called Uzuk(73), and was given into the custody of the most trusted person. Being the custodian of the Uzuk seal was a great honour. It usually remained in the custody of a harem lady(74), but from time to time it was entrusted to favourite and trusted nobles. Akbar entrusted it to Khawaja Jahan, Khan Azam Mirza, Aziz Khan Kuka(75), and Jahangir to Amir al-Umara Muhammad Sharif(76). Later on it was entrusted to prince Parwez and then again to Muhammad Sharif (77). During Shahjahan's time it was first given into the custody of the empress Mumtaz Mahall(78), and then on her request it was entrusted to Asaf Khan(79). In the later years of Shahjahan's reign it used to be in the custody of Jahanara Begam(80). The Uzuk was a small round seal and was used only for Farman-i-dabti(81) for titles, appointments, and awards of jagirs (fiefs)(82).

There were other seals as well. Abu'l-Fadl informs us that there were five seals: the Uzuk, the seal with the name of the reigning king in the centre and his ancestors' on the margin; a square seal for all orders; a triangular (mihrebi) shaped seal for judicial orders, and a seal for the transaction of harem business. For validity, these royal seals had to be put on all orders, ordinances, and Farmans (royal patents). All orders for the appointment of princes to wakil, qadr(83), mir bakhshi, amir al-umara(84) and ataliq(85) were stamped by royal seals(86). Jahangir revived the old Mongol seal al Tamgha which was used on the farman of jagirs (fiefs)(87). He changed its name to Altun (gold) Tamgha(88).

Until the end of Shahjahan's reign, the Uzuk seal was round. During the reign of Alamgir the shape of the seal was changed from round to square. It contained the name and titles of the emperor in the centre circle, and on the marginal circles were the names of his ancestors. In the four corners of the seal were the names of God and quotations from Qur'an(89).

Every emperor on his succession put his personal seal on all the valuable property of the state(90).

Royal Standards

The standard was an old symbol of royalty in the East. Muslim ruling dynasties, at the time of their succession, chose the colour of their standards. The colour of the Umayyads' standard was white, the Abbasids' black(91), the Saljuqs' red in the beginning and black after the occupation of Baghdad (1055), the Qarakhanids' orange, and the Alids and Fatimids white(92).

The Mughul rulers had no particular colour for their standards. They used many standards of different shapes as insignia of royalty. The use of some of them was purely by prerogative and nobody else was allowed to have them. Some of the standards were awarded to princes and high

nobility with some reservations, and could be displayed only with royal permission. Whenever the emperor went out in procession, royal standards with different symbols and colours were carried as a symbol of the royal presence.

At the time of a procession, at least five standards were carried including the Qur(93). Among of these two were the Chartuq and Tumantuq(94). The standards were carried behind the emperor(95).

Royal standards contained different symbols such as:

Panja (the Handi); Mizan (the symbol of justice); Aftab (the sun); Azdaha Paiker (the dragon's face); Mahi (the fish); ana Qumquma (the lantern)(96).

Royal Prerogatives

There were certain prerogatives of the Mughul emperors which were jealously guarded by the sovereign. Nobody was allowed to sit in the audience balcony (Jharoka darshan), arrange elephants fights, inflict the punishment of death, or mutilation, like blinding or cutting off the nose or ears of the criminal, nor to force the singer to remain on duty in their presence as at the imperial court(97).

One of the royal prerogatives was the playing of music in the music gallery (Naubat-Khana), where the musicians sat and played music(98).

By playing different tunes the movement of the emperor was announced; these tunes were played at exact times: at midnight; at dawn; 24 minutes before sunrise, and 24 minutes after sun-set. During the rest of the day musicians played seven times with different tunes. On the coming of the emperor to the court, music was played to inform the courtiers, and it was again played when he was about to rise(99). On Sunday it was played all the day(100).

When the emperor was on the march, this was announced by the beating of kettledrums. In camp they

were beaten at intervals of three hours. They were rarely awarded to princes or high nobility without some conditions; such as that they should not be beaten in the presence of the emperor, and not within a certain distance from his residence(101). Jahangir, as a special favour, bestowed kettledrums and an orchestra on Nurjahan Begam (d. 1645) with the privilege that it should be beaten after the king's(102) Once prince Muhammad Mu'azzam beat four drums at the time of his audience, and Alamgir sent him a reproaching letter stating that it was the prerogative of the king alone to beat them(103). To play naubat without royal permission was regarded as a violation of the rights of the king(104).

The chatr (umbrella) and kaukaba (shining ball) were insignia of royalty and were never bestowed on anybody. The chatr(105) was adorned with jewels and accompanied the emperor to the court or in procession. The aftabgir (parasol), which was of oval shape and like an umbrella covered with brocade and studded with precious stones, served to protect the royal person from the sun's rays. The kaukaba, which were round in shape, shining golden balls, were hung before the royal hall(106).

To go to the mosque in the palki (palanquin)(107), and to pray in the mosque after setting the screen, were royal prerogatives. Alamgir wrote a scolding letter to prince Mu'azzam who, once, said his prayer in this manner(108). He sent him another upbraiding letter when he held an elephant fight and sat on a raised platform. He was informed that the holding of elephant fights and sitting on a platform one yard above the ground were royal prerogatives(109).

The hunt called Qamargah (ring-hunt) was also a royal prerogative (see p. 76). Nobody, including the princes, were allowed to enter the royal hunting place without royal permission(110). The lion hunt was reserved for the king, and even at a time of danger it was not

permitted to kill a lion without permission(111). The emperor had a right over his subjects to make them surrender their hunts, as it was the rule of Chingiz Khan that the inferior should surrender his hunt to his superior(112).

Elephants captured in war were the emperor's property; and the best part of war booty was also reserved for the kin(113). Nobody except the king was allowed to buy costly and precious stones(114).

Princes were not allowed to follow the customs and manners of the royal court and keep their nobles or servants standing in their presence(115). They were not allowed to award titles to their subordinates.

Women did not observe pardah(116) in the presence of the emperor(117). In fancy bazaar all women came into the presence of the emperor. He used to go from shop to shop and talk to the ladies. When he was invited by nobles to their houses. women from their household came into the presence of the emperor and paid homage. On one such occasion Humayun saw Hamida Banu Begam and fell in love with her(118).

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9. A'in, I. 45
10. Monserrate, p.199.
11. Roe, pp. 325-26
12. Terry. p. 328.
13. Tavernier, pp. 80, 303, 306, 308.
14. Manucci, i. p. 88.
15. Ogilby, pp. 163; Mandelslo. p. 30.
16. The concept of the Peacock Throne was most probably derived from the throne of Solomon of which a peacock was painted. The Abbasids and Fatimids had jewelled peacock thrones at their court. (For further details, see Jairazbhoy, R.A.: *Oriental Influence in Western Art*. Bombay 1965, p. 22). For the Peacock Throne of Shahjahan, see Lahauri, ii, pp. 80-81.
    Bernier, p. 268.
17. Thevenot, p. 42.
18. Tavernier, pp. 303-4.
19. Ibid., p. 305.
20. Ibid., p. 305. See Brahman, *Qawa'id-i-Saltanst-i-Shahjahani* p. 63, who gives a lively description of the Peacock Throne: "Over the throne is erected a canopy resembling the empyrean one, embroidered with valuable pearls; There are also two Umbrellas embroidered and fringed with large pearls; and the poles by which they are fixed over two chairs, inlaid with precious stones, are ornamented in the same manner. There are also inlaid stars, valued at seventy-five thousand rupees each, which are suspended at proper distances from each other: and the imperial throne is encompassed with rails of gold and silver".

21. 40 miles from Delhi.
22. He was the captain of the fleet of Sultan Sulaiman the Magnificent; (1520-1566); and the author of *Mi'rat al-Mamalik* (Mirror of Countries). It contains description of his journey over land from the Indian shores to Istanbul. He visited the court of Humayun in 1556. Vambery, A.: *The Travels and Adventures of the Turkish Admiral Sidi Ali Reis.* London 1899, p. 57:
"His face and eyes were veiled. The Chamberlain Koshhal Bey stood behind while many officers and dignitaries as well as the people from the river side, on seeing their sovereign, made joyful obeisance to the sound of festive music".
23. 40 miles from Amritsar.
24. Salih, i, p. 476. Lahauri, i., pp. 82, 91.Mu'tamad, pp. 2,5.
25. In India day and night were divided into 8 Pahars. 8 Pahars were equal to 60 Gharis; and one Ghari to 60 Pals. One Ghari is thus equal to 24 minutes of our time.
26. Offerings or presents which were given to the emperor to show allegiance.
27. She was the favourite wife of Shahjahan.
28. Presents to be distributed among the poor as charity to solicit the welfare of the man to whom the Nithar was presented.
29. She was the eldest daughter of Shahjahan.
30. A son of Shahjahan, younger to Dara Shikuh.
31. The youngest son of Shahjahan.
32. A celebrated general during the reign of Akbar, Jahangir, and Shahjahan.
33. The chief military advisor.
34. Holding of the rank of 5000 cavalry.
35. The office of Wakil-i-Saltanat was equal to the Prime Minister in early years of the Mughuls rule.

Later on it became insignificant and its duties were taken over by the Diwan. For other details, see Lahauri, i, p. 173.

36. Lahauri, i, pp. 82, 97.
37. Kazim, pp. 354, 403; Musta'idd, pp. 22, 24.
38. A'in, i, pp. 118-19. A Turkish word meaning amour; from it derived Qurkhana (arsenal) and Qurchi (keeper of the arsenal), see Doerfer, G.: *Turkische and Mongolische Elemente in Neupersischen*. Wiesbaden, 1963-1975, i, p. 427. Under Chingiz Khan there were four men who carried the bow and arrows of the emperor. They were known as Qurchi. See Barthold, W.: *Turkistan Down to the Mongol Invasion*. London 1968, p. 382.
39. The hall of audience for nobility invited by the emperor to consider particular matters.
40. Kazim, pp.351-53.
41. The youngest daughter of Shahjahan.
42. The daughter of Alamgir.
43. The daughter of Alamgir.
44. The eldest son of Alamgir.
45. The second son of Alamgir
46. The third son of Alamgir.
47. The fourth son of Alamgir.
48. Bakhtawar Khan: *Mi'rat-i-'Alam*. B.M. Add. 7657, p. 384.
49. Tavernier, p. 297.
50. Ibid., p. 297.
51. See Ovington, pp. 177-78:
    "Whenever the Indian Emperor is proclaim'd, 'tis with public jubilee, with Sonds and Music, Mirth and Revellings, Fireworks and gawdy shows in all paerts of the Kingdom; on this day their ships hang out their flags and Ensigns".
52. Lahauri, i, pp. 113-15; Salih, i, p. 212.

53. For the farman (royal patent) which was issued by Shahjahan after his coronation and sent to Asaf Khan, who was at that time in Lahore, see, Lahauri, i, 113-15.
Salih, i, p. 212;
Pirzada, M.H.: *Coronation of Muhammadan Sovereigns of India.* In: JPHS, 1911-12, p. 149:
"Our uncle, full of wisdom, Asaf Khan, may know that on the 8th of Jamadi ii, year 1037 A.H. at the 4 ghari of the day, we took our seat on the throne at Agra. We assumed the name of Sahib-i-Qiran-i-Sani, Shahabuddin Mohammad Shah Jahan Badshah-i-Ghazi, and it was announced in the full Darbar, in the Khutba; and Coins were also struck in the same name. We hope that Almighty God, who has given us sovereignty of the whole India simply by His Grace, may make our reign auspicious to us, to you who are our partner in the state and to all our people".
54. Tuzuk, i, pp. 8-9: I) forbade the levy of different cesses, tamgha (a stamp tax generally for import), mir bahri (port duties) and others. ii) Sarays, mosques, and wells should be built on deserted roads. iii) baggages of merchants should not be opened on roads. iv) after the death of a person his property should be given to his heirs. v) intoxication was prohibited. vi) no one was allowed to take the possession of other's house. vii) cutting of noses and ears as a punishment was prohibited. viii) land of ryot should not be taken. ix) Collectors and Jagirdars were not allowed to marry in a pargana where they were appointed. x) hospitals should be established in great cities. xi) killing of animals on certain days was prohibited. xii) offices and jagirs of Akbar's servants were confirmed.
55. Salih, i, p. 258.

56. Khwafi Khan, ii, p. 77)
57. Akbar established the Ilahi Era in his 29th year's of his reign (1582) and put into effect from his succession 1556). It was solar and began on the 11the March. It had twelve months with a number of days from 29 to 32.The months of the era were given Persian names:
    Farwardin, Urdibihisht, Khurdad, Tir, Amurdad, Shahriwar, Mihr, Aban, Azar, Dai, Bahman, and Isfandarmuz. Cf. A'in, i, pp. 265-89.
    Bada'uni, ii, p. 306.
58. *Cambridge History of India*. Delhi. 1963, iv, p. 130.
59. Sermon or address which is recited by the khatib in the congregation prayers on Friday and Id festivals.
60. Pirzada, M.H., pp. 113-14.
61. Sultan Muhammad Khudabanda or Oljeitu (1304-1316) caused the names of twelve shi'a Imams to be read in the khutba. Cf. Haworth, H.H.; *History of the Mongols*. London 1888.-Repr. New York 1966, iii, p. 559.
    Baburnama, p. 258. Siddiqui, A.H.: *Caliphate and Kingship in Medieval Persia*. In: IC x, 1936, p. 262.
62. The names were recited in this order: Qutb al-Din Amir Timur, Jalal al-Din Miran Shah, Sultan Muhammad_Mirza, Sultan Abu Sa'd Mirza, 'Umar Shaikh Mirza, Zahir al-Din Babur, Nasir al-Din Humayun, Jalal al-Din Akbar, Nur al-Din Jahangir, Shihab al-Din Shahjahan, and Muhyi al-Din Aurangzeb Alamgir.
63. Pirzada, M.H., p. 146.
64. Salih, i, p. 226; Qawa'id, p. 68.
65. *Cambridge History of India*, iv, p. 95.
66. Lane Poole S.: *The Coins of the Eastern Khaleefehs in the British Museum*. London 1875.-Repr. Bologne 1967, pp. viii, ix, (introduction).
67. Khwafi Khan, ii, p. 77.

68. Pirzada, N.H., p. 149.
69. Tavernier, p. 324.
70. See the article Khatam in EI 1.
71. Sharma, S.R.; p. 27.
72. Felix, P.: *Mughul Seals*. In: JPHS 5, 1916, pp. 110-111. Terry, p. 447. Pietro della Valle, p. 1.
73. A particular seal. See Doerfer, G., ii, p.148.A'in, i, p. 48.
74. Monserrate, p. 209
75. Ma'athir al-Umara, i, p. 685.
76. Tuzuk, i,.p. 18. Roe, p. 97.
77. Ibid., ii, pp. 18-19.
78. Lahauri, i, p. 148.
79. Salih, i, p. 279.
80. Ibn Hasan: *The Central Structure of the Mughul Empire*. London 1936, p. 102.
81. It was for the appointment of a mansab (rank); a Jagir (fief); and for conferring suyurghals. Cf. A'in, i, p. 48.
82. A'in, i, p. 48.
83. The chief justice, the minister of religious affairs, education, and the royal almoner.
84. One of the highest titles at the Mughul Court.
85. The teacher and guardian to princes.
86. A'in, i, pp. 47-48
    Ibn Hasan, pp.94-95.Monserrate, p. 209.
87. al Tamgha or "vermilion seal" was attached by the Mongols on the documents. Cf. Juwaini,,Ata-Malik: *The History of the World Conquerer*. Translated by A.J. Boyle. Manchester 1968, i, p. 145.
88. See Tuzuk, i, p. 23: "I ordered that they should cover the place for seal with gold-leaf (tilaposh) and impress the seal thereon, and I called this the altun-tamgha".
89. Felix, P., p. 118.

90. Percy Brown: *Indian Painting under the Mughuls A.D. 1150 to A.D 1750*. Oxford 1922, p. 152.
91. Ma'mun (813-833) changed the colour of the 'Abbasids' standard from black to green (the colour of the Prophet) after his nomination to Ali Rida (d.818) as his heir-apparent. See the article Ali Rids in EI 2.
92. Spuler, B.: *Iran in Fruh-Islamischer Zeit*. Wiesbaden 1953, pp. 348-49.
93. They were placed near the throne at the time of audience and in procession were carried on the elephant's back. Cf. A'in, i, p.118.
94. Tuman meaning the commander of ten thousand, and Tugh meaning the yak-tail standard which was bestowed on the commander of ten thousand by the Mongol rulers. Chgr-tugh, the yak-tail standard was probably, conferred on the commander of four thousand. The Mughul emperors kept these standards as a royal prerogative and rarely awarded them to princes and nobles. Cf. A'in, i, p. 46.
    Azad, Muhammad Husain; *Darbar-i-Akbari*. Lahore 1939. p. 149.
95. Qureshi, I.H.: *Administration of the Mughul Empire*. Karachi 1966, p. 105.
96. Irvine, W.: *The Army of the Indian Moghuls*. London 1903, pp. 32-33.
    See Peter Mundy, p. 199: "In every procession there were different standards with particular Ensignia as a hand, a grand ball, a serpent's head, a falcon". Terry, p. 364
97. see Tuzuk, I, p. 205: "I ordered that the Bakhshis should circulate orders, to be obeyed among the Amirs of the borders, that thereafter they should not interfere in such things, which are the private affairs of kings. The first thing is this that they should sit in the Jharoka (private window) ... and should not

have elephant fights, and should not inflict the punishment of blinding, and should not cut off ears and noses.... and should not confer titles on their servants.....and should not force singers to remain duty in the manner customary in (royal) darbars and should not beat drums when they go out". Jahangir called these regulations A'in-i-Jahangiri.

98. In Ancient Persia and India rulers had military band and kettle-drum houses (naqqar khana) where the music was played to declare the movements of the king. The Abbasids jealously guarded the playing of kettledrums as a royal prerogative. Cf. Busse, H.: Chalif and Grosskonig. Wiesbaden 1969, p. 186. The Sultans of Delhi maintained the Naubat Khana as a royal prerogative.

99. Tavernier, p.30.

100. Mathur, N.L.: *Red Fort and the Mughul Life*. Delhi 1964, p. 12.

101. Irvine, W., p. 30.

102. Tuzuk, ii, p. 229.

103. Sarkar, p. 133.

104. Ibid., p. 93.

105. Chatr was the symbol of royalty in Eastern countries. Its use was confined only to the king in Persia since the days of Assyrian Sargon, (Olmstead, A.T., p. 64). It accompanied the king where ever he went, even on military expeditions (Olmstead, A.T., p. 283). In India the chatr was used by rulers as a royal insignia, The shape and design of their chatr was varied. The Raja of Cochin had a palanquin with the chatr as his royal symbol. One of the titles of Indian rulers was the Chatrapati; the Lord of the Umbrella. (for details, see Balfour, E.: *The Cyclopaedia of India and Southern Asia*, Graz 1967, iii, pp. 897-99.

106 A'in, i, p. 45.

107. Sarkar, p. 133.
108. Ibid., p. 62.
109. Ibid., p 64.
110. Najib Ashraf Nadwi: *Muqaddima-i-Ruga'at-i-Alamgiri*. Azamgarh n.d., p. 391.
111. About the lion hunt, see Jairazbhoy, R.A. : *Oriental Influence in Western Art*. Bombay 1965,p. 91.
112. Gulbadan Begam, p. 92.
113. Bada'uni, ii, p. 48.
114. Tavernier, p. 111.
115. Sharma, S.R., p. 27.
116. Veil; curtain with which Indian women of rank screened from strangers.
117. To appear before the king and pay him homage unveiled was the Mughul custom. Cf. Azad Muhammad, p. 697.
118. Gulbadan Begam, p. 53.

Chapter 3

The Mughul Court

The Court and the Ceremonies

The court was the administrative source-head of the Empire where all business of the state was conducted; governors were appointed; office-holders (mansabdar)(1) were promoted; farmans (royal patent) were drafted; new ordinances were proclaimed; awards were bestowed; presents were accepted; punishments were given; complaints were heard; justice was done; expeditions were dispatched; and ambassadors were received.

It was the centre of social gathering also, where all nobles, mansabdars, and government officials met each other daily, because it was the obligation of every noble, who was present at the capital, to attend the court regularly, except in the event of serious illness or for a few other reasons. The absence of a noble was immediately noticed and an explanation was demanded. Regular attendance at court attached people emotionally to the emperor and filled their heart with awe and respect for him.

The imperial court used to be held in the imperial capital, but when the emperor left the capital for a long time, the court and central government moved with him. When the court moved along with the emperor, the nobles, provincial governors, and tributary and independent rulers of neighbouring states were supposed to come and pay homage to the emperor(2).

Fathpur, Agra, and Lahore served as capital cities during the Mughul rule. The section of the royal palace

where the emperor held his court was known as Diwan-i-'Amm. At Fathpur Sikri the building of Diwan-i-'Amm is a large courtyard with galleries on all sides. On the eastern side is a balcony of red stones which is eight feet high from the ground, and here the throne of the emperor was deposited. In the palace at Agra, Diwan-i-'Amm is 192 feet in length and 64 feet in breadth. It is also of red stone. At the back of the hall is a balcony where the throne was placed. From the back of the hall is an access to the family quarter. A marble stone is laid before the balcony, on which wazirs and nobles stood and received royal orders(3).

In the Diwan-i-'Amm there were two railings of wood, inside the first railing only high nobles and ambassadors were allowed; while in the second were admitted inferior ambassadors, and Ahis(4). Outside the railings stood the servants of nobles and other people. Jahangir, to make a distinction between these two railings, made the first with silver and placed two statues of elephants on both sides of the balcony (Jharoka). The staircase of the balcony and the wooden statues of elephants were covered with silver(5).

During the reign of Shahjahan, in Diwan-i-'Amm at the Red Fort in Delhi three sides of the balcony were surrounded by silver railings with a gap for an entrance where the macebearer stood. Here mansabdars up to the rank of 200(6) were allowed. Then there was a room of red stone which was decorated with silken and muslin hangings. Here macebearers admitted mansabdars less than the rank of 200, Ahdis, and those people who had permission. Outside of it stood common soldiers and the servants of nobles.

Inside the silver railing all nobles were placed according to their status. Wazirs; bakhshis(7), and other government officials presented the cases of their departments for decision. All matters of appointments, promotions, increments, award of jagirs (fiefs), bestowal of

gifts, and plans for expeditions were discussed and decided(8).

Manucci writes about three railings at the court, golden, silver, and wooden, which divided the courtiers in the presence of the emperor. The golden railing was a cubit high and nobody was allowed inside it except princes; between the space of the silver and wooden railings stood the nobles. Outside the wooden railing stood nine saddle horses, and behind them were four elephants and a number of soldiers(9).

Between these railings stood the master of ceremonies (Mir-Tuzuk) and the mace-bearers (yasawuls), to ensure that nobody should move from his reserved place(10). Manucci writes about three orders of mace-bearers bearing golden, silver, and iron maces. Bearers of golden maces conveyed messages to princes, bearers of silver ones carried communications to generals, and bearers of iron ones were used for inferior business(11).

During the time of Humayun, his appearance at the court was announced by the beating of drums and his departure by the firing of a gun(12). Later on the movements of the emperor were announced by playing different musical tunes(13).

Nobody was allowed to enter the boundary of the court (darbar) without permission(14).

The court was specially decorated on occasions of Nauruz, on the emperor's solar and lunar birthdays, when the weighing ceremony (Tol-dan) was held, on the birth of royal children, at Id festivals, on the arrival of foreign ambassadors, on the festivals of Dasahra, and Diwali, at the celebration of some conquest or victory, or on the emperor's recovery from illness. On such occasions the emperor or some high official of the state supervised the decoration of the court.

When the emperor appeared in the court he was loudly greeted by the courtiers. After he had sat on the

royal throne, Qur, swords, shields, and spears were laid down on a stool at the left of the throne(15). Two persons bearing fly-whisker (choris) stood behind him to keep away flies(16).

There were different modes of paying homage to the emperor. One was kornish (obeisance), "the palm of the right hand to be placed upon the forehead, and the head to be bent forward". Another was taslim (salutation), "placing the back of the right hand on the ground, and then raising it gently till the person stand erect(17)". Kornish and taslim signified readiness to serve the emperor with soul and heart. Prostration (sajda) before the king was introduced by Akbar (1582), but it was regarded as highly objectionable. To ease down the feelings of people, he discontinued it in Diwan-i-'Amm, but retained it in Diwan_i_Khass(18). However, Akbar exempted 'ulama', sayyids, and other religious people from the sajda ceremony(19).

Shahjahan, after his succession, abolished the sajda(20). Instead he introduced chahar taslim (four salutations). In performing this mode of respect, a person standing on his feet bowed double, touching his forehead with the palm of his hand and then lowered his hand so that the back of it touched the ground, doing this four times(21). The emperor exempted 'ulama' from chahar taslim, and they were allowed to greet him as a muslim greets another muslim erect on their feet(22). In the tenth year of his reign, Shahjahan even abolished the placing of the hand on_the ground, which was like a sajda by proxy. 'Alamgir, on his succession to the throne, abolished chahar taslim, and nobles were required to greet him as a Muslim greets another Muslim with the words "the peace be upon you".

On bestowal of a mansab (rank), gift, title, jagir (fief), promotion in rank, robe of honour, and elephant, the recipient of the award performed three taslim(23). When a person received gifts from the emperor, such as the royal portrait, a bracelet or string of pearls, he put it on his head,

then touched round his throat, ear or neck and made chahar taslim. On the award of a robe of honour chahar taslim were made. It was the custom to put on the robe of honour just after receiving it and appear in the court, here again four taslim were made, and after performing it the sash was put over the shoulders. In the case of an ordinary robe, the recipient was allowed to perform only four taslim. On bestowing arms, the sword was suspended round his neck, daggers (khanjar and jamdhar) were put in his hands, the quiver was thrown behind his back; after performing four taslim he put the sword in his scabbard, bow, matchlock in hands and again performed four taslim(24).

The places of princes and nobles were reserved at a certain distance from the throne. The eldest prince stood four yards from the throne when standing; if he was allowed to sit, the distance of his seat from the throne had to be eight yards. Second and third princes when standing, stood at the distance of one and one-half to six yards; when sitting, from three to twelve yards. Young princes were given a place nearer to the throne. The places of courtiers were at a distance of three to fifteen yards from the throne; when sitting, this had to be from five to twenty yards. Senior and respected nobles were given places at a distance of three and half yards, while others stood from ten to twenty and half yards(25).

Seats were reserved according to the status of the courtier(26). Courtiers stood to the right and left of the throne forming two wings. The place before the throne remained open. Generally one wing consisted of nobles and government officials, the other of 'ulams' and religious persons. On the appearance of the king, all courtiers performed kornish and taslim and stood with folded hands indicating their readiness for the service of the emperor(27). Poets, artists, musicians, singers, wrestlers, and other entertainers remained present to display their skill at the command of the emperor(28).

Courtiers were not allowed to talk to each other, or speak loudly. Profound silence was the decorum of the court(29). Nobody was allowed to move from his place without permission. Violation of these rules invited the wrath of the emperor. When the emperor took notice of somebody and wanted to show his favour, he just bent his eye-brows or in some cases gave a side glance. On the arrival or departure of some favourite noble, he was allowed to come near the throne and kiss the feet of the king, who, to show his favour, put his hand on the man's back(30).

When a new person was presented at the court, he was first instructed by the master of ceremonies (mir tuzuk) how to behave before the king, and to perform taslim(31). On his entry to the court he was thoroughly searched, then guided by court officials and announced before the emperor. After performing his taslim or kornish, he addressed the king in a low tone and presented his gifts. If the emperor wanted to give him a favour, his presents were taken personally and a few words were said to him, otherwise he was unceremoniously dismissed. If the emperor was angry with a noble, he was asked not to come to the court for certain days as a punishment, because permission to attend the court was regarded as a privilege for selected persons. The discredited noble soon tried to win the favour of the king through the intercession of some nobles. Permission to allow him to come to the court was a symbol of forgiveness on the part of the emperor(32).

Courtiers were supposed to come to the court in a proper manner. If somebody came drunk, he was punished irrespective of his status. Once Lashkar Khan came to the court of Akbar in a state of intoxication, and in punishment he was sent to prison(33). In the time of Jahangir this rule was strictly observed; "the Porters smell his breath", writes Roe, "and, if he haue but tasted wyne, is not suffered to in"(34).

Courtiers were also expected to come to court in proper dress. Once Marhamat Khan came to the court of Alamgir in a dress which was not proper, it was noticed by the emperor and a letter was sent to him as a warning(35). To come wearing a turban and to leave shoes at the entrance were in the etiquette of court. It was an oriental tradition to appear before a superior wearing the turban and without shoes. Nobody was allowed into the court from the time when the emperor sat on the throne until he rose. Courtiers were not allowed to come with arms, in palki (palanquine)(36) to the red wall (glalbar) of the emperor, wearing red dress, nim astin (half sleeves) or wrapping their shoulders with shawls (37).

Akbar introduced the custom that when somebody wanted to submit a petition, he must bring a gift for the king, no matter of what value it was(38). Nobles and those who were in the service of the emperor, started to present a pishkash(39) at the time of their first introduction and continued it as long as they remained in service. Persons of distinction, on their first appearance at court, presented valuable gifts to win the favour of the emperor.

Rebels and prisoners of war were presented in open court. On their appearance they had the sword put round their neck and their hands tied. The sword was removed by the order of the emperor as a sign of his forgiveness. After Kamran's(40) submission, his followers brought before the emperor Humayun, Qaraja Khan, leading him with the sword round his neck before the emperor. When he reached the torch (burning in the darbar) the emperor ordered to remove the sword from his neck(41). Bairam Khan(42), after his submission (1560), appeared before Akbar with tied hands and a sword hanging around his neck. The young emperor untied his hands personally. Prince Khusru(43) was presented before Jahangir with tied hands and a chain on his leg from the left side, which is said to be Chingizi rule(44). Special courts were held when important

prisoners were presented: Alamgir, for instance, held a special court when Sambhaji (45) appeared before him(46).

The imperial throne in the court was regarded as sacred(47). and nobody was permitted to approach without permission. Once prince A'zam Shah asked something of Alamgir and. not receiving a reply, he advanced in anger until his foot touched the emperor's throne. Alamgir was so annoyed that he left the court in anger(48).

The favourite nobles were allowed to stand near the throne: thus Mahabat Khan and Asaf Khan stood at the court of Shahjahan on his left and right sides(49). Jahangir was the first ruler who allowed Shahjahan to sit on a chair at court near the throne. "This was a special favour for my son, as it had never been the custom heretofore(50)". Later on Shahjahan permitted Dara Shikuh to sit on a golden chair near the throne(51).

To allow somebody to come into the Jharoka (balcony) and near the throne was a special favour. Prince Khurram, on his return after securing the submission of Mewar and the Deccan Sultanates, was given this honour. Jahangir allowed him to come near the throne. rose himself from the throne and embraced him(52).

In the court the emperor maintained full dignity and decorum and never showed any weakness before his courtiers. Once Babur, on the reception of an ambassador, felt an unbearable pain in his leg, but he remained seated, unmoved and without any indication of pain. Alamgir, once dislocated his knee and could not walk properly. On his appearance in the court a curtain was hung before the throne and moved when he was seated on the throne(53).

At the end of the proceeding of court, a screen was dropped in front of the seat of the emperor which signified that the court was over. He then retired to the harem by the back door(54).

In public court people were allowed to come and lay their complaints before the emperor(55).

Humayun set up a tradition that the keeper of the wardrobe should bring dresses of honour and keep them ready at court. Cash money also remained at the disposal of the king(56). The same practice was followed by other rulers(57).

Mughul emperors were keen to have the best, costliest and most valuable things in their possession. Therefore, merchants from Iraq, Khurasan, Rum, Syria, China and Europe came to their court and brought diamonds, jewels, pearls, and other rarities of their countries. They were received with honour and highly paid for their commodities(58).

Princes, provincial governors, high officials of the state, Rajas, foreign rulers, and high nobles kept their representatives (wakil) at court. They attended the court regularly and recorded every event which happened at the court. Their record was called the news of the court (Akhbarat-i-Darbar-i-Mu'alla), and through this they kept their masters well-informed. They represented their master in their absence and defended their interest. When a prince or noble was out of favour, his wakil, too, was affected. Isa Khan who was the wakil of prince Aurangzeb was imprisoned by Dara Shikuh(59).

Proceedings of the court were recorded by the Waq'a-Nawis(60). Besides the proceedings of the court they were required to know each and every movement of the emperor: when he ate, drank, when he slept and rose; and the etiquette in the court(61). All conversations between the king and courtiers were written down(62). Monserrate was surprised by the speed at which they wrote the proceedings and conversation(63).

If somebody presented an application it was loudly read at the court. Roe's letter was twice read in a loud voice(64).

Reception of Ambassadors

Embassies from Persia, Balkh, Kashghar, Rum, Yaman, Ethiopia, Muscat, Mecca, England. Holland, and Portugal came to the Mughul court. They brought letters of congratulation on the succession of a new emperor and condolence on the death of the late king. Through this exchange of embassies, political and commercial problems were solved and friendly relations were maintained.

On the arrival of an embassy, great care was taken. From the time of their entry to the empire, provincial governors and government officials provided them with all kinds of facility. When the party arrived near the court, high government officials and nobles were sent out to receive them. Bazaars and markets were decorated in their honour. On their first appearance the court was specially decorated(65).

Accommodation for the ambassador was provided at the house of some prominent noble, who looked after him(66). They were treated as state guests and their expenses were paid by the state(67).

Before his appearance in the court he was instructed by the master of ceremonies (Mir Tuzuk) how to behave before the emperor. Sometimes these instructions were accepted, sometimes not(68). On his coming to the court his entry was announced and a place was reserved for him according to his status. Shah Tahmasp's ambassador paid kornish at the court of Akbar, "he presented with the two hands of respect and laid upon the edge of the throne a letter(69)". The letter from an ambassador was taken by some noble and, after opening it, he presented it to the emperor. After having read the letter, the emperor received the presents brought by the ambassador(70).

Sometimes the king asked questions about his king, about his journey, and said a few words in appreciation of

his gifts. If a letter were taken by the emperor personally it was regarded as a great honour(71).

At the time of his first and last appearance at the court, he was given the robe of honour (khil'at), horses and elephants, and cash(72). Besides this, he was awarded valuable gifts from time to time. During his stay he was invited by nobles for entertainment. He could not leave court without royal permission(73), and to keep an ambassador at the court for a long time was a sign of disinterest; therefore, sometimes the emperor was requested by a foreign ruler to give his ambassador early permission to leave the court.

Mughul rulers regarded the Persian court as equal to theirs. Therefore, Persian ambassadors were allowed to bow according to their etiquette(74). After the deterioration of diplomatic relations with Persia (under Jahangir, Shahjahan and Alamgir) their privileges were transferred to Osmanli ambassadors. Envoys from Bukhara, Samarqand, and Kashghar were neglected. Ambassadors from big countries asserted the superiority of their masters, making some remarks or reciting some verses. These were promptly replied to by courtiers and court poets. Such incidents sometimes created a lively atmosphere at the court and sometimes led to bitterness(75).

Roe gives a vivid description of the Persian embassy which came to the court of Jahangir in 1615:

"He made at the first rayle (railing) 3 Teslims and some sizeds (sijda)....at the entrance in, the like; and so presented the Shah Jahangir his letter; which the king took with a little motion of body, asking only: How does my brother."(76)

Jahangir gave to the Persian ambassador a robe of honour and the ambassador made taslim. He brought with him Persian and Arabian horses, mules, velvet-loaded camels, Persian hangings, muskets, clocks, carpets, rubies, Persian wine, distilled sweet water, daggers and swords

inlaid with precious stones and Venetian looking glasses(77). A feast was given in honour and 20.000 rupees were given for his expenses(78). Besides these. Jahangir bestowed a horse with a jewelled saddle. a jewelled sword. a vest without sleeves with gold embroidery. an aigrette with feathers and a turban ornament (jigha). and 40.000 rupees in cash(79). On the arrival of the embassy from Shah Abbas (1661) to the court of Alamgir. Muammad Amin Khan was sent with one thousand soldiers to-receive the ambassador and to find out the purpose of his mission. All bazaars and streets were decorated and music was played. On his appearance he made obeisance in the Persian manner. while officers of the court forced him to bow in Mughul style. He handed over the letter from the Shah. which was taken by Shah Alam (the son of Alamgir) and read out in a loud voice. He was awarded a robe of honour (khil'at) by the emperor. then the gifts were presented before the emperor. consisting of horses. camels. rose water. and carpets(80).

Ambassadors brought rarities of their countries to the Mughul court. The Uzbeg ambassador once brought for Akbar pigeons and a pigeon fencier (kabutarbaz)(81). Qasim Khwaja of Dihbid sent Jahangir five white falcons(82). The embassy from the Sharif of Mecca brought for him curtains from the door of the Ka'ba(83). Once the Uzbeg ambassador presented to Jahangir nine hunting dogs(84).

Daily Routine of the Emperor

Mughul rulers had a high concept of kingship, and regulated the daily routine of life with a deep sense of duty. Their view of kingship is mirrored in the words of Abu'l-Fadl:

"No dignity is higher in the eyes of God than royalty(85)". The gift of royalty which was bestowed upon the person of the king made him high and sublime.

Therefore, he should follow a virtuous life, must be led by reason, must not waste his time in improper things, restrain his desire, be moderate in giving punishment as well as awards, keep a watch on all persons and guide them to the right path, maintain justice, make his subjects happy, accept truth and respect capable people(86). Following this concept of kingship, Mughul rulers personally supervised every detail of administration and took a full part in public life. They regulated their routine on such principles that the emperor's presence was required everywhere. People were accustomed to see their ruler following his routine regularly, and any absence created suspicion and doubt. Therefore, he tried to observe the routine in spite of physical sickness, to check any rumour about his health and to keep the administration running without interruption. He missed his routine only in the event of serious illness or some unavoidable accident or death in the royal family. Akbar altered his routine on only a few days during the whole span of his reign. Jahangir strictly followed his routine: "Even in the time of weakness", he writes, "I have gone every day to the Jharoka , though in great pain and sorrow, according to my fixed custom(87)". Shahjahan's illness disrupted his well-defined routine, and resulted in civil war and the loss of his throne. Alamgir, well aware of this fact, rarely missed his routine in spite of his serious illness(88).

The daily routine shows that the king personally presided over all the business of administration in consultation with his ministers, the Diwan(89) Mir Bakhshi, Khan-saman(90)

Sadr, and other high civil and military officers. He discussed all political, social, and religious problems.

He looked after the affairs of his family and remained well informed about the condition of the country.

Akbar was the first Mughul ruler who regulated the routine on strict principles. Every moment of his time was

fixed for some state business. He got up early in the morning, and spent some time on toilet and dressing. After sunrise be appeared in the Jharoka (balcony) for the darshan (audience)(91), which provided an opportunity for the common people to see the emperor and to present their complaints directly to him. It made the king accessible to the people(92).

He watched sometimes from the Jharoka elephant fights and other entertainments. After Jharoka darshan he visited the imperial elephants' stable (filkhana) to inspect its condition and management, then he held morning court, which was open to the public. He spent four and a half hours conducting the administration and work of the day. He appeared again in full court (darbar) in the afternoon and spent four and a half hours there. He supervised the royal workshops and settled any matters of importance. Any change was announced by the beating of drums. He then retired to the harem and settled the cases of royal ladies(93). In the evening darber (court), the atmosphere was less formal. He held conversation with the learned scholars, and enjoyed discussions on various subjects. Sometimes matters of importance were also discussed and settled. He retired to bed after enjoying music late at night(94).

Jahangir, Shahjahan, and Alamgir followed this routine with minor changes. We find in detail the daily routine of Shahjahan which was strictly followed by him. He woke up early in the morning, said his prayers in the palace mosque and appeared in the Jharoka for darshan(95). He sat in the Jharoka balcony for two gharis, sometimes more and sometimes less(96). Before the Jharoka there was a space where entertainments were held: dancing, music concerts, fights of elephants and other animals, jugglers' tricks, reviews of military officials and their soldiers. People presented their petitions to the king without any hindrance(97). Ibn-Hasan thinks that he did not

receive the petitions directly like Akbar, but that they were received by government officials and were presented in the Daulat Khana or Khilwat Khana later on(98). After Jharoka darshan he held darbar in Diwan-i-Amm. It was attended by the sadr, mir-saman, diwan-i-biyutat(99), mir atish(100), mushrif of topkhana(101) and bakhshis of various departments. They stood near the throne and presented their cases before the emperor. All papers were read by the emperor, and the cases of increment, promotion and appointment were decided. Reports from provinces were read and farmans were written down. He reviewed the royal elephants, horses, and other animals to see whether or not they were getting proper food(102).

He went to the Ghusulkhana or the private audience hall(103), where the court was held by Shahjahan twice a day, once in the morning just after the court in Diwan-i-Amm, and another time in the evening. Here he discussed those matters of administration which could not be presented in Diwan-i-Amm. He appointed governors for different provinces, read personally all farmans and corrected them if there were any mistakes. These farmans were, afterwards, sealed by the Uzuk seal. The sadr presented the cases of needy and deserving persons, who did not like to come before the public in Diwan-i-Amm for the award of religious stipends (Madad-i-Ma'ash). Sometimes he discussed religious and other worldly matters. He observed pieces of art prepared in royal workshops (karkhana), such as paintings and calligraphy. He checked the plans of new buildings which were in the process of construction or which he intended to build and suggested some alterations, which were conveyed to the engineers. Royal jewellery, swords, royal birds and animals were brought before him for inspection. He spent nearly two hours in the Ghusulkhana(104).

From the Ghusulkhana he went to the Shah Burj (king's tower), which were in Delhi, Agra, and Lahore. In

the beginning only princes were allowed to attend these meetings; later wazirs, wakils, and some of the high officials were allowed to come and discuss those things which could not be discussed openly. Important farmans for provincial governors were also written down here. He spent two or three gharis (see p. 18) in the Shah Burj.

In the afternoon he retired to the harem and ate his lunch in the palace with the royal ladies and took his siesta. After Zuhr prayer (afternoon prayer) Mumtaz Mahall presented the cases of poor and needy women. He awarded them stipends, jagirs (fiefs), and cash. In the case of poor girls, money for their dowry was given and their marriages were arranged. He stayed in the harem till Asr prayer, which he said in the mosque and then came again to the Ghusulkhana. Sometimes he reviewed the royal guard. In the evening the Ghusulkhana was illuminated and he enjoyed music and witnessed deer fights.

At 8 o'clock after Isha prayer (night prayer) he retired again to the Shah Burj, where bakhshis and chief wakil presented the remaining important cases. From here he retired to the harem, had his dinner, and listened to music for nearly an hour. He liked to hear Mughul, Kashmiri, and Hindi songs. When he retired to bed, good reciters read for him history, or biographies of prophets, rulers and great people. He listened with interest to Zafar-nama, Babur-nama, and Akbar-nama on the history of Timur, Babur, and Akbar respectively. On Friday there was no court and the day was observed as a holiday(105).

Alamgir followed the routine with rigidity. He was a man of strong nerves and overpowered his own illness or weakness. He woke up early in the morning, said his prayer, and engaged himself in reciting the Qur'an (tilawat), some holy verses (wazifa) and rosary (tasbih). At 8.30 he appeared for the Jharoka darshan (audience balcony), which he later on discontinued(106).

He held his morning darbar at about 9.30, where bakhshis presented their reports which were personally read by him. From Diwan-i-Amm he came to Diwan-i-Khasss and discussed with ministers and issued farmans for the appointment and the transfer of mansabdars. From here he retired to the harem. ate his lunch. and took a rest. After Zuhr prayer he appeared again in a private chamber and signed papers which were brought by the Diwan. After Asr prayer he again busied himself in administrative affairs till Maghrib prayer (evening prayer). Here he discussed religious matters and amused himself with story-tellers, and travellers who narrated their adventures. Then the court was dismissed and he retired to the harem after the Isha prayer. He read some book and then slept at midnight(107). He slept for only three hours(108).

References

1. The civil and military officers of the Mughuls were known as mansabdar (rank-holder).
2. On such occasion Raja Bharmal, the ruler of Ambar, offered the hand of his daughter to Akbar. On another occasion Jani Beg, the ruler of Sind, did not come to the court. Akbar was so annoyed that he sent an expedition against him to bring him back into the fold of obedience.
3. Havell, E.B.: *A Handbook of Agra and the Taj.* Calcutta 1924, p. 47.
4. The Mughul emperors had an army of retainers directly under the command of the emperor. These gentlemen troopers served the emperor in individual capacity. They were called yaka i.e. single. Akbar gave them the name of Ahdi i.e. monotheist. Cf. Ain, i, p. 187. Ahmad Bashir: *Akbar, the Great Mughul.* Lahore 1967, p. 165.
5. Tuzuk, i, p. 242. See Roe, p. 11: "The place is a great Court, whither resorted all sorts of people. The king sits in a little Gallery over head; Ambassadors, the great men and strangers of quality within the inmost rayle vnder him, rayed from the ground, covered with canopy of velvet and silk, vnder foote layed with good carpets"
6. Holding of the rank of the commandant of 200 cavalry.
7. Mir Bakhshi, the chief military advisor, was called the first bakhshi. His two assistants were called the second and the third bakhshis. The first dealt with

the royal princes and high officers; the second with the second grade officers; the third with the lowest. Cf. Sharma. S.R.: *Mughul Government and Administration* Bombay 1951. p. 46. Qureshi, I.H.: *Administration of the Mughul Empire*. Karachi 1966, p. 78. Ibn Hasan: *The Central Structure of the Mughul Empire*. London.1936. p. 210.

8. Salih. i. pp.244-45.
9. Manucci, i, pp. 88-89.
10. Qawa'id, p. 47. Elliot & Dowson, v, p.122.
11. Manucci, ii,p. 423.
12. Elliot & Dowson, v, p. 121.
13. Monserrate, p. 211.
14. Manrique, p , 163.
15. Careri, G.: *Indian Travels of Thevenot and Careri*. Delhi 1967, p. 220.
16. Manrique, p. 163. The fly-flapper attended the king in ancient Persia. Cf. Olmstead, A.T., p. 182.
17. *A'in*, I, p. 156 Blochmann, p. 58.
18. Ibid., p.157. Blochman, p. 59. Bada'uni, ii, pp. 301, 259.
19. *Akbarnama*, iii, p. 272.
20. Salih, I, i. 258; Lahuri, I, pp. 110-12.
21. Manucci, i, p. 88; Ovington, p. 183.
22. Salih, i, p. 258.
23. *A'in*, i, pp. 156-57; Qawa'id, p. 47.
24. Ibid., pp. 48-49.
25. *A'in*, i, p. 157; *Akbarnama*, i, p. 358.
26. In the court of the Sasanian kings the courtiers were divided into three groups: first, according to their birth and rank, second, members of the royal family and officials of the royal retinue, and third, jugglers, jesters, and musicians. Cf. Girshman,R.: *Iran*. Harmondsworth 1954, p. 312. Nizam al-Mulk, in the *Siyasat Nama*, recommends that the courtiers be divided into different categories, as the relatives of

the king. nobility. and other officers and servants. If all were assembled in one place. there would be no distinction between high and low. See Nizam al-Mulk: *Siyasat Nama.* Tehran n.d., p. 182.

27. Ai. p. 157. In ancient Persia the courtiers, while standing in the presence of the king, kept their hands in the sleeves to prevent any attempt of assassination. (See Olmstead, A.T.. p. 283) The Mughul Courtiers stood putting their hands on breast signifying the posture of, as Abul-Fadl writes, amada-i-khidmat (ready to serve).
28. Ibid., p. 156.
29. Qaws'id, p. 47; Hawkins, p. 115; Bernier, p. 260; Peter Mundy, p. 200; Manucci, ii, p. 330.
30. Qawa'id. p. 49.
31. Manucci, i, pp. 87-88.
32. Elliot & Dowson, ii, pp. 534-35.
33. *Akbarnama*. ii, p. 384.
34. Roe, p. 304.
35. Aurangzeb, Alamgir: *Ruqqa'at-i-Alamgir*. Kanpur 1884, p. 46. *Letters of Emperor Aurangzeb*, tr. by Joseph Earles. Calcutta 1788. p. 60: "Merhemet Khan came to the court to day in an elegant dress, and the skirt of his robe was so long that his feet could not be seen from it.'We ordered Merhemet Khan in consequence to cut off two bands breath from it... You may now tell him to confine the length of his garments to that which has been prescribed and is customary at the court".
36. Tavernier. p. 81.
37. Athar Ali: *The Mughul Nobility under Aurangzeb*. London 1966, p. 138.
38. Bada'uni, ii, p. 322.
39. Valuable presents which are presented to princes or superiors.
40. The second son of Babur.

41. Bayazid Bayat: *Memoirs of Baizid (Bayazid)*. In: Allahabad University Studies. Vol. vi. part i. 1930, p. 108.
42. Entitled Khankhanan, a distinguished general of Humayun and the Regent during the early years of Akbar.
43. The eldest son of Jahangir.
44. Tuzuk. i, p. 61.
45. The son of Shiwaji. the Marhata leader.
46. Elliot & Dowson, vii. p. 340.
47. In Ancient Persia any attempt to sit on the throne was regarded as an offence against the king. Cf. Olmstead, A.T., p. 283.
48. Sarkar. p. 73; Hanrique, p. 163.
49. Peter Mundy. p. 204.
50. Tuzuk. i. p. 395.
51. Manucci. i, p. 88.
52. Tiizuk. i. p. 277.
53. Manucci, iii, p. 255. The concept of superiority of the king demanded that in case of physical pain the ruler must suffer rather than show any weakness before his audience. Cf. Peter Arnat: The Byzantines and their World. London 1973, p. 199. The Byzantine emperor Michael iv. who was subject to fits, sat on the throne surrounded by purple curtains. When a fit seized him, the curtains were drawn and again opened when the fit had passed.
54. Sarkar, pp. 73-74.
55. Manucci. ii. p. 461.
56. Elliot & Dowson, v, p. 122.
57. Ibn Hasan. p. 282.
58. Qaws'id, p. 48.
59. Elliot & Dowson, v, p. 122; Manucci, ii, p. 444; Najib Ashraf Nadwi: Muqaddima Ruqqa'at-i-'Alamgiri. Azamgarh n.d., p. 117.

60. A'in, i, pp. 192-93.
61. Ibid., p. 192-93.
62. Foster, V., p. 55.
63. See Monserrate, p. 205: "They kept down what he says with such speed that they appear carefully to catch and preserved his words before they can fall to the ground and be lost". Charhar Chaman, 127.131: Hawkins, p. 400; Thevenot,p. 26.
64. Roe, p. 209.
65. Bernier, pp. 146-47.
66. Khawafi Khan, ii, pp. 126-27.
67. *Akbarnama*, ii, pp. 188, 262, 295, 358, iii, p. 721; Monserrate, pp. 8, 37, 50, 64, 133-34.
68. The Persian ambassador visited the court of 'Alamgir in 1661 and made obeisance in the Persian manner. Cf. Manucci, ii, pp. 48-50.
69. Akbarnama, ii, 188.
70. Bernier, p, 118.
71. Ibid., p , 119.
72. Khwafi Khan, iii, p. 126-27.
73. Bernier, p . 148; Manucci, ii, p . 48.
74. Bernier, p. 120.
75. When the envoy of Shah Abbas Safawi came to the court of Akbar, he recited this quatrain: The Zangi is proud of his soldiers, tribe, and army, The Rumi is proud if his spear, sword and dagger, Akbar is proud of his treasury full of gold, Abbas is proud of Dhulfiqar Haider (Ali). Faidi, the poet laureate, promptly replied: The paradise is proud of Salsabil and Kauthar (names of two rivers in the paradise), The Sea is proud of pearls and the sky of stars, Abbas is proud of Dhulfiqar Haider, Univerise is proud of the holy person of Akbar. Cf. Ghani, A.: *A History of Persian Language and Literature at the Mughul Court*. Allahabad 1929, iii, p.64.
76. Roe, p. 295.

77. Ibid. , p.296.
78. Ibid., p.202-3.
79. Tiizuk, i, pp.248-49
80. Manucci, ii, pp. 48, 51. The gifts, which were exchanged between the ambassador and the king, consisted of jewellery, brocade, weapons, perfumes, horses, slaves, precious stones and specialities of their countries. The Safawi rulers sent to the Mughul court Arabian and Georgian horses, the Mughul rulers sent elephants, tigers, leopards, gazelle, rhinoceros, parrots, hippopotamuses and optic instruments. (See Busse, H., Hiba (Persia) in EI2).
81. Akbarnama, iii, p. 486.
82. Tuzuk, i, p. 10.
83. Ibid. , p. 13.
84. Ibid., p. 277.
85. A'in, i, p. 2;Blochmann, p. ii (introduction).
86. A'in, i, pp. 2-3; Blochmann, iii (introduction).
87. Tuzuk, ii, p. 14; Roe, pp. 107-8; Bernier, p. 360.
88. In 1704 Alamgir's serious illness prevented him from coming to the court which put the country into panic. See Elliot & Dowson, vii pp. 382-83: "The Emperor was seized with serious illnessand had severe pain in his limb, which caused grave apprehension. But/he exerted himself, took his seat in the public hall, and engaged in business, thus giving consolation to the people. But his illness increased, he had fainting fits and lost his senses, so that very alarming rumours spread abroad, and for ten or twelve days the army and camp were in great distress. By the mercy of God he grew better, and occasionally showed himself to the people in the public hall".
89. Equal to Wazir, he supervised all the administration, especially the finance.

90. The minister in charge of the royal household.
91. A Hindi word meaning "sight". The darshan is regarded a visit to the shrine or an exalted person as a source of luck for the whole day. Cf. *Akbarnama*. iii. pp. 256-57; Lahauri. i. pp. 143-45. Salih. i. pp. 242-43. De-Laet. pp. 92-93. 97. Hawkins. p. 115.
92. See Bada'uni. ii. p. 326: "Low people who could not get into the Daulat Khana flocked together below the Jharoka at sun-rise. and unless they saw the sacred face they regarded food and drink prohibited to them". Cf. Lahauri. i. pp. 143-44: "This institution was the innovation of Hazrat Arsh-i-Ashyani (Akbar) and it has been continued by His Majesty also (Shahjahan). so that the people might get the blessing of seeing the king before beginning their daily work. and the needy and the oppressed may get justice and redress without any formality or hindrance".
93. *Akbarnama*. iii. pp. 256-58.
94. A'in. i. p. 155. Ibn Hasan, pp. 66. 70.
95. Qawa'id, p. 45. The audience balconies were in three capital cities. Delhi. Agra. and Lahore.
96. Salih:. i. p. 143.
97. Qawaid. p. 45. Manrique. pp. 269-70.
98. Ibn Hasan. p. 69.
99. The representative of mir-saman in the provinces. He supervised roads, royal buildings and workshops.
100. He was the in charge of royal artillery.
101. The accountant in the artillery.
102. Ogilby, p. 161.
103. Lahauri. i. pp. 146-48. Abu'l-Fadl used the term Daulat Khana, Shahjahan called it Daulat Khana-i-Khas. It was also called Khilwat-Khana.
104. Peter Mundy. p. 201.

105. Qawafid, p. 58. Salih, i, pp. 49, 5Q, 246. Chahar Chaman, pp. 11, -23, 39. Lahauri, i, pp. 146-153. Ibn Hasan, pp. 75, 82, 84. Saksena, B.P.: *History of Shah Jahan of Dihli*. Allahabad 1932, pp. 241-43.
106. Khwafi Khan, ii, p. 213.
107. Kazim, pp. 1096, 1106. *Ruqq'at-i-Alamgir* (Kanpur edition), pp. 6-7. Sarkar,J: *Studies in Mughul India*. Calcutta 1933, p. 31.
108. Manucci, ii, p. 332.

Chapter 4

The Court Celeberations

The celebrations and festivals were the lively aspect of court routine. They provided opportunities for the Emperor to display his wealth and grandeur. "Rulers search for opportunities for a feast", writes Abul-Fadl, "and make an occasion for liberality and forgiveness(1)".

All celebrations were solemnized regularly with the same glamour and grandeur wherever the court was, in the, capital or on travel. Akbar also introduced some old Persian and Indian festivals, such as Jashn-i-Nauruz (New year's day) in 1582 and the Hindu ceremony of Tol-dan (the weighing ceremony on the birthday of the Emperor) in 1565.

On all festival occasions, courtiers brought for the Emperor the nadhr(2) and Pishkash(3) (presents). The Emperor himself awarded valuable gifts, conferred new titles, bestowed jagirs (fiefs), promoted them to high mansabs (ranks), and increased their allowances(4). Thus it was an occasion for the Emperor to recognize the services of nobles rendered during the period preceeding a festival.

Celebrations brought a happy change in the life of the royal palace. Royal ladies wore new dresses and ornaments, met each other, gave the Emperor presents which they prepared for these occasions, and amused themselves with the dance and the music of the dancing and singing girls. The Emperor, for his part, awarded gifts and khil'ats and increased allowances. Women officials of the harem and women guests were also given khil'ats and costly gifts(5).

Jashn-i-Id al Fitr(6) and Jashn-i-Id al-Adha(7)

The most celebrated festival was the Id al-Fitr. The news of the appearance of the moon was announced by beating of drums. The emperor went to the Idgah(8) with a grand procession, to say Id prayer with a congregation. He distributed money on his way to the Idgah(9). In the Id prayer the khatib after prayer stood on the second step of the pulpit (minbar) and recited the khutba. After praising the Prophet and the Four Caliphs he descended to the low steps and praised the emperor. He was awarded the robe of honour(10).

The Id was celebrated in a grand manner. A special court was held and titles and gifts were awarded to nobles and princes. Nobles brought nadhr for the emperor(11). Jahangir, on his first Id prayer after his succession, distributed a large amount of money by way of charity. He sent 5.000 rupees to be distributed among darwishes, and instructed 50.000 dam to be given to beggars (faqir) as a charity. He further ordered that needy women should be brought before him for financial help(12).

Id al-Adha was celebrated on a grand scale on the tenth of Dul-Hijja. The emperor went to the Idgah distributing money(13): He performed the Qurbani(14). After Id prayer, writes Manucci, "when the king came out of the mosque, he mounted a horse and gave a lance thrust to the neck of a camel which was thrown for sacrifice(15)". Id al-Adha was celebrated for three days, and on the second day the emperor went for an excursion to some garden along with his court(16).

Jashn-i-Id-i-Milad al-Nabi

(The Feast of the Prophet's Birthday)

The birth anniversary of the Prophet of Islam was celebrated solemnly. The emperor usually gave a great entertainment to which religious people, sayyids, shaikhs,

and ulama were invited(17). Alms and charity were distributed among the needy people(18).

Jashn-i-Shab-i-Miraj

The Festival of the night of the Prophet's Ascension to Heaven Jashn-i-Shab-i-Miraj was celebrated with full dignity and religious reverence. The significant part of this celebration was the illumination in the night(19). On one Shab-i-Miraj, an illumination was arranged by Nurjahan Begam the "like of which has perhaps never been arranged in any place(20)".

During the reign of Shahjahan the illuminations were made in the Diwan-i-Amm on the wall and roofs of the royal palace. The emperor and courtiers were amused by firework displays during the night, which were presented with great skill(21). Awards and gifts were given to nobles, while ten thousand rupees were distributed as a charity among the poor(22).

Jashn-i-Nauruz

The Festival of New Year's Day(23)

Nauruz was originally a Persian festival, which was celebrated on the first of Farwardin (the first month in Persian chronology) when the spring season began(24). It was celebrated for seven days with great merry-making: in the royal Naubat-khana kettledrums (naqqara) were beaten, singers sang charming songs, and musicians entertained with melodious tunes. Towers, minarets, and all the points of the royal palace were illuminated with colourful light which shone through coloured shades looked like a field full of flowers. Green flags and banners were hoisted to indicate the advent of spring. A procession of the army passed through the streets all houses were decked in different coloured, embroidered silken cloths, soldiers were dressed in colourful uniforms bearing glittering swords, shields, bows and arrows: elephants were equipped with

ornaments and carried howdas on their backs. "They carried sharp scimitars in their trunks", writes Manrique, "with blades five inches wide. But while they present a terrific and awe-inspiring spectacle, in this respect they nevertheless appeared pleasing enough when one's sight fell on the numberless flags and banners of varied silks of all colours which adorned the tops of their towers."(25).

The emperor and courtiers, on this occasion, dressed in glamorous cloths and greeted each other warmly. About the celebration of Nauruz, Monserrate writes, "Games were held and Pageants conducted each day. The king himself was enthroned on a high golden throne approached by steps."(26).

During the celebration, one day was reserved for the public when they were allowed to come to the court. On other days only nobles attended the darbar (court). Some of the nobles used to come from far-off provinces to take part in the festivities and brought rare gifts for the emperor. On the first and last days of the festival gifts were generously awarded. On the last day nobles presented gifts and received presents from the emperor(27).

In 1582 Akbar introduced a tradition that on each day of the festival a noble should arrange a grand feast and invite the emperor and present valuable gifts to him. The emperor accepted some of the gifts and the rest were distributed among the nobles(28).

A fancy bazaar was the interesting part of the Nauruz celebration: here stalls were distributed to different nobles, who erected beautiful tents and displayed interesting articles for the inspection of the emperor. The emperor visited these stalls and appreciated those who decorated them best. Once during the reign of Akbar, Mir Fath Allah Shirazi, a scientist, displayed in his stall instruments from his laboratory(29). A fancy bazaar was also held for the royal ladies, which was called Mina Bazar. All the shopkeepers and customers in this bazaar were

ladies of high rank. No man was allowed to purchase foods in the bazaar. The emperor was the only exception. In the bazaar women shopkeepers displayed things in which they themselves were interested, for the inspection of the emperor "The King and his Begams", wrote Thevenot, "pay'd often double value for a thing, when the shopkeepers pleas'd them(30)".

Jahangir, after his succession, celebrated his first Nauruz on a grand scale: "Players and singers of all bands and castes were gathered together. Dancing lulies (public singers) and charmers of India whose caresses would captivate the hearts of angels kept up the excitement of the assemblies". He promoted nobles to high mansabs; including Raja Baso, Shah Beg Khan, Ray Sing, and Ram Shankar(31).

On the first Nauruz celebration of Shahjahan, the huge and large tent Dal-Badal was brought from Lahore and erected in the courtyard of Diwan-i-Amm. The inside was decorated with beautiful European, Turkish, and Chinese hangings(32). He bestowed jewels, ornaments, gems, pearls, robes of honour, jewelled daggers, swords, elephants, and horses. Alms and charities were distributed among the poor(33).

Alamgir abolished the festival of Nauruz when as the celebrations of Id al-Fitr, and Id al-Adha and daily Iftar (opening of the fast) throughout the month of Ramadan were given prominence(34). He did not allow even princes to observe it. On receiving the news that prince Shah Alam celebrated it he wrote him a rebuking letter, "we are informed, from respectable and disinterested authority, that he celebrated the feast of Novroz this year, which the barbarian Persians keep. Let him inviolable adhere, in God's name, to his own principles and customs, and not adopt new ones."(35).

Jashn-i-Wazn

The Festival of the emperor's Birthday

Mughul emperors celebrated the weighing ceremony twice a year, on their solar and lunar birthdays. The author of Tabaqat-i-Akbari refers to this ceremony as Majlis-i-Wazn(37). On this occasion the emperor was weighed against costly and valuable commodities and food stuffs, which were distributed among the poor throughout the year(38). In Jahangir's time this wealth was also spent on public works such as the construction of bridges(39).

Preparation for the weighing ceremony was started two months in advance: the court and the palace were decorated and colourful tents (shamyana) were erected. Precious stones diamonds, jewels, and thrones were displayed in the great hall. People throughout the town celebrated the occasion, with festivities, music, dancing and firework. The best dancing women and singers remained at the court ready to dance and sing(40).

Nobles and royal ladies presented gifts consisting of diamonds, rubies, emeralds, pearls, costly carpets, elephants, and horses (41). The emperor awarded titles to his nobles and bestowed jagirs (fiefs) and other gifts in recognition of their services(42).

The weighing ceremony on the days of the emperor's solar and lunar birthdays was celebrated regularly whether the emperor was in the capital or travelling. Shahjahan celebrated his weighing once on the lake of Mandal, and on another occasion on the bank of Narbada.

On his solar birthday the emperor was weighed against twelve articles: gold, quicksilver, silk, perfumes, copper, mercury (ruh-i-tutiya), drugs, clarified butter (ghi), rice-milk, seven kinds of grains, and salt. Besides these (according to the number of years of the emperor's age), sheep, goats, and fowls were distributed among the poor. A number of animals were set free on this occasion. On his

lunar birthday he was weighed against eight articles: silver, cloths, lead, tin, fruits, sweat-meats, vegetables, and mustard oil(43).

The balance in which the emperor was weighed was made of gold. The time to sit in the scale was fixed by astrologers, and at the time of his sitting, both sides of the scale were held by elderly men, who recited prayers for him(44). After it the weight was registered, and if it was more than the previous year, all the courtiers present expressed great joy(45). Physicians, at the time of the ceremony, checked him and kept an account of his health(46).

It appears that during the time of Jahangir, articles for his weighing were sent by royal ladies. Usually his weighing ceremony took place at his mother's palace; and a string to which a knot was added for every year of the emperor's age, was kept in the harem (47).

After the ceremony he sat on the throne and fruits of gold and silver were distributed among the courtiers(48). Newly coined silver was also scattered among the common people(49). At midnight a wine party was held to which nobles were invited. Roe participated in such a party but the wine was so strong that he could not drink it.(50).

Royal elephants, on this occasion, passed before him richly clad and well equipped. "They all bowed before the King", writes Roe, "making reverence very handsomely, and was showe as worthy as I ever saw any beast only"(51). The emperor used to give a grand feast to which all dignitaries were invited(52). The festivities lasted for five days(53).

Princes were also weighed once a year on their solar birthday. The first weighing ceremony was held at the age of twelve; they were weighed against one article, then every year another article was added until the number reached twelve. It was not permitted to weigh more than twelve articles(54).

Jashn-i-Sihhat

The Festival of the Recovery from illness of the Emperor and of Royal Personages. The recovery of the king, princes, and princesses from illness was celebrated with festivities. A grand feast was given to nobles, alms and charity were distributed generously. When prince Salim recovered from pimples and princess Jahanara from serious burns (1644) their jashn-i-sihhat were celebrated in a befitting manner(55). Shahjahan, who had a deep love and affection for Jahanara gave diamonds and precious stones to the deserving people. He awarded robes of honour (khil'at) to the royal ladies, princes, and nobles. On the ninth day of the jashn, the royal palace and both banks of the river were illuminated(56).

Physicians, especially were awarded on this occasion. Arif, a royal servant, whose ointment caused the recovery of Jahanara, was weighed against rupees, and awarded a robe of honour, horses and elephants(57).

Nobles, princes, and princesses presented gifts on the recovery of an emperor. Jahanara once presented a golden throne to Shahjahan(58).

Jashn-i-Gulabi

The Rise Water Sprinkling Festival

It was a festival held in the spring season. Princes and nobles, on this occasion, presented to the king jewelled and ornamented water-bottles, jugs, and jars filled with water, and rose water(59). It was celebrated by sprinkling rose water on each other(60). Jahangir called the festival Gulab-Pashi instead of Ab-pashi(61). The emperor, besides other gifts, gave to his nobles flasks filled with rose water, and perfumes(62).

Jashn-i-Tajpushi

The Annual Coronation Celebration

The anniversary of the coronation was celebrated every year with grandeur, and a grand feast was given(63).

Military music was played eight times in a day and night(64). It was not only observed in the capital but throughout the Empire(65).

Jashn-i-Mahtabi

The Festival of Ful Moon

During the full moon, Jashn-i-Mahtatl was observed in front of the Diwan-i-Amm. White was the dominant colour of the occasion. White velvet was spread on white carpets; white curtains of muslin were hung. Candles were lighted on white glasses. The emperor and all his courtiers dressed in white clothes with white ornaments. Festivities lasted till morning(66).

The Festival of Holi(67)

The festival of Holi was also celebrated at the Mughul court. A feature of this festival was the fastening of the Rakhi(68) on the arm of the emperor by Hindu nobles. Jahangir continued this practice and on one occasion ordered that the Hindu amirs and the heads of the caste should fasten Rakhis on his arm(69).

The Festival of Diwali(70)

The festival of Diwali i.e. the necklace of lamp, was celebrated with a great illumination at night on the day of the festival. Jahangir made this festival livelier by asking the nobles of court to play games of chance for two or three days on the occasion, and loose and win in his presence(71).

The Festival of Dasqhra(72)

The Hindu festival of Dasqhra was also celebrated at the Mughul court. The emperor gave robes of honour and presents to the Hindu courtiers. On the occasion of this festival, elephants and horses were particularly decorated and passed before the emperor(73).

The Festival of Basant(74)

On the festival of Basant the emperor used to go to the garden or to the bank of a river, where he held pleasure parties with his nobles(75).

Jashn-i-Fath

The Festival after Victory

The festival after a victory was celebrated on a grand scale, and those who had displayed courage and bravery in war were generously rewarded. If the emperor himself had gone out to command, his return to the capital was celebrated with great pomp and show. Poets recited their qasida-i-Fath (panegyric ode to the emperor referring to his recent victory). The festivities lasted for several days.

References

1. *Akbarnama*, iii, p. 74. Beveridge, H., iii, p. 102.
2. A present from an inferior to a superior.
3. Valuable presents offered to the King as a mark of allegiance.
4. Tuzuk, i, p. 50.
5. Manucci, ii. pp. 345-46.
6. It is the festival of the breaking the fast. It is also called Id-i-Ramadan, and Id-i-Sadaqa.
7. The feast of sacrifice.
8. The place where all Muslims of the town prayed in congregation.
9. Salih, i, pp. 289-90, 332. Lahauri, i, p. 372. Musta'idd, pp. 48, 54, 60, 95, 107, 120, 147, 156, 162. Elliot & Dowson, v, p. 449. Manucci, ii, p.349: "On that day, at nine o'clock the king comes forth from his palace with great display and majesty, and visits "the great mosque, where the Chief qazi awaited him, standing on a platform with seven steps".
10. Sharif Jaffar: *Qanoon-e-Islam*. London 1832, p. 263.
11. Salih, i, p. 291; Tuzuk. i, p. 46.
12. Tuzuk, i, p. 46.
13. Lanauri, i, p. 101; Musta'idd, p. 162; Kazim, p. 930. Peter Mundy, pp. 197-8: "Hee Shahjahan came riding on a Royal Eliphant in a rich Ambare; over his head a Canopie of cloth of gold supported with pillars...with himself satt three of sons. As he passed, hee flung gold among the people".

14. Slaughtering a lamb, goat, cow, or camel, one third of whose meat was distributed among the poor, and the rest among relatives and friends and for feasting upon by the members of the family.
15. Manucci, ii, pp. 349-50.
16. Kazim, p. 930.
17. Nahawindi Mulla Abd al-Baqi: *Ma'athir-i-Raimi*. Calcatta 1910, i, p. 864. Lahauri. i, p. 231. Elliot & Dowson, v, p. 412
18. Kazim, p. 233.
19. See Tuzuk, i, p. 298: "I had ordered that on the Shab-i-Barat Mi'raj; they should place lamps round the Kankriya tank...The building all round the tank they had arranged with lanterns of different colours and all kinds of artifices that are practicabel with lamps, and fireworks".
20. Ibid., p, 385.
21. Salih:, i, pp. 105, 285-86.
22. Ibid., ii, p. 311. "Lahauri, ii, p, 216, Thevenot, p, 31.
23. In Achaemenid time the official year began with Nauruz. The Sasanid rulers celebrated it with public festivities. During the time of Abbasids rule it was introduced at the court with other Persian festivals. Cf. al-Biruni, Abu-Raihan: *Athar al-Baqiya* Engl. tr. by C.E. Sachau as: *The Chronology of Ancient Nations*. London 1879; Repr. Frankfurt 1967, pp. 199-204.
24. See A'in, i, p. 200. Blochmann, p. 276: "It commences on the day when the sun in his splendour moves to Aries, and lasts till the nineteenth day of the month (Farwardin). Two days. of this period are considered great festivals, when much money and numerous other things are given away as presents : the first day of the month of Farwardin and 19th, which is the time of the

sharaf". On the Mughul Nauruz, see *Akbarnama*, iii, pp , 378-79. Bada'Gnf, ii, pp. 172, 261, 338. Tuzuk, i, pp. 48,85,138,154,165,191,206,235,259,280,317, 370. Lahauri, i, pp. 177, 256, 297, 364, 418, 473. Musta'idd, p. 162. Monserrate, p. 176. Hawkins, p. 118. Roe, p. 143. Peter Mundy, p. 238.

25. Manrique, p. 194.
26. Monserrate, p. 175.
27. Nahawindi, M.A., i, p. 883.
28. Tuzuk, i, p. 49.
29. Bada'uni, ii, p , 321.
30. Thevenot, p. 50.
31. Tuzuk, i, p. 49.
32. Lahauri, i, pp. 187-88.
33. Salih, i, pp. 282-83.
34. Bakhtawar Khan: Mi'rat-i-'Alam. B.M. Add. 6757, p. 385. Kazim, pp. 390-91. Elliot & Dowson, vii, p. 241.
35. *Letters of the Emperor Aurangzeb*. Engl. tr. by Joseph Earles. Calcutta 1788, p. 12.
36. Ancient Persian kings celebrated their birthdays with festivitles. On this occasion a banquet party was held and gifts and robes of honour were awarded to the courtiers (See Olmstead A.T.: *History of the Persian Empire*. Chicago 1966, p. 182). The Mughul rulers on their birthdays, used to weigh them against valuable and eatable stuffs following the old Indian custom Tol-Dan. On the weighing ceremony, see *A'in*, I, p. 197. *Akbarnama*, iii, pp. 392-93. Tuzuk, i, pp. 111-12, 299. Mu'tamad p. 186, Musta'idd, p. 31. Roe, p. 412. Terry, p. 375. Nanrlque, p.203. Tavernier, p. 301. Bernier p. 270. Manucci; ii, p. 345.
37. Elliot & Dowson, v, p. 304.
38. Bada'uni, ii, p. 84.
39. Tuzuk, i, p. 160.

40. Thevenot, p. 47; Tavernier, p. 206.
41. Ovington, p. 179. Tavernier, pp. 302-3. Manrique, pp. 201-4.
42. Tuzuk, i, p. 78.
43. *A'in*, i, p. 198; *Akbarnama*, iii, pp. 392-93. *Tuzuk*, i, pp. 3, 332.
44. Ibid., p. 78.
45. Thevenot, p. 47.
46. Terry, p. 328.
47. *Tuzuk*, i, p. 78. See Roe, on an account of the weighing ceremony of Jahangir (1617), pp. 411-12: "In the midst a Pinacle, where was prepared the scale being hung in large tressels, and a cross beam plated on with gold tninne, the scale of massive Gold, the borders set with small stones Rubies and Tarkey (Turrquoises), the Chains of Gold large and massie, but strengthened with silk cords. Here attended the Nobilitye, all sitting about it on Carpets, untill the King came; who at last appeared clothed, or rather loden with Diamonds, Rubies Pearls, and other Precious vanities, so great, so glorious. His sword Target, Throne to rest on correspondent; his head, neck, breast, armes, above the elboews, at the wrist, his finger every one with at least two or three Rings, fettered with chains, or dyalled Dayamonds, Rubies as great as walnuts (some greater), and Pearls such as mine eyes were amazed at. Suddenly he entered into the scale...and there was put in against him money begges to fit his weight, which were changed six times, and they say was silver...After with Gold, and jewels and precious stones...,Then against Cloth of Gold, Silk, Stuffes, Linnen, spices, and all sorts of goods... Lastly against meals, Butter, corne..."
48. Ibid., pp. 257, 413, Manrique, p. 203, Ogilby, p. 166.

49. Manrique p , 203.
50. Roe, p. 413. Thevenot, p , 50.
51. Roe, pp. 252-53. Thevenot, p. 47. Tavernier, pp.307-8.
52. Manrique, p. 201.
53. Ibid., pp. 201-4. Tavernier, pp. 302-3.
54. *A'in*, i, p. 197. *Tuzuk*, i, pp. 81, 115, 346, 424. *Salih*, i, p. 322, ii, p. 406.
55. *Akbarnama*, iii, p. 205. *Salih*, ii, pp. 4, 15. Elliot & Dowson, vi: p.131.
56. Lahauri, ii, pp. 346, 394-5, 400.
57. Ibid., pp. 395-96.
58. Salih, ii, p. 225.
59. *Tuzuk*, i, p. 295. 9alih, i, p. 374, iii, p. 248. Qaw'id, p. 64; Lahauri, i, .204., ii, p. 101. Kazim, pp. 404, 623.
60. *Tuzuk*, i, p. 295.
61. Ibid., p. 265.
62. Kazim, p. 623. There is a portrait of Jahangir's court painted by Govardhan, celebrating the festival of Gulab-Pashi, in Percy Brown's Indian Painting under the Mughuls A.D. 1550-to A.D. 1750, p. 127: "In different parts of the picture attendants are seen scattering rose water (gulab) from small bottles over the assembly, while at the back of the Emperor are a number of minor officials, such as fly whisk holders, the gun carrier, the court musicians and the sword bearer. In front paying their respect to his majesty, are the highest officials, of the crown, one of whom is offering a Ma'al Lahm, or a preparation of almonds...Below is a small band of musicians, some playing instruments, other singing and beating tunes by clapping their hands".
63. Elliot & Dowson, vii, p. 266.
64. Manucci, ii, p, 104.
65. Ovington, p. 178

66. Lahauri, i, pp. 148, 152; Salih, i, pp. 248-49.
67. The great spring festival held at the approach of the vernal equinox in honour of Krishna. For further details, see Balfour, E.: *The Cyclopaedia of Indian and Eastern and Southern Asia*. Graz 1967, ii, p. 93.
68. A wrist band of a few cloth threads differently coloured is bound to avert evils. In the old tradition only Brahmans and females had the right to bind the Rakhi. In Rajputana the ladies used to send the Rakhi or wrist-band, as token, to those whom they liked to adopt as brother. He was then called "bracelet band brother" or "Rakhi band bha'i". Cf. Tod, J.: *Annals and Antiquities of Rajist'han*. London 1914, i, pp. 250, 463.
69. Tuzuk, i, pp. 245-6.
70. Diwali meaning "a row of lamps". It is celebrated on the day of the new moon of Karttik in honour of Karttikeya, the god of war. At this festival, the Hindus, after bathing in some river, put on best dress, at night they worship Lakshmi, the godess of gold: houses and streets are illuminated, and the night is spent in gambling.
71. *Tuzuk*, i, pp. 245, 268.
72. Dasahrfl meaning "the taker away of ten sins". Whoever baths in the Ganges on that day is said to be purified from ten sorts of sins. This day was celebrated by Hindu princes with great pomp.
73. Tuzuk, i, p. 252., ii, p. 38. Kazim, p. 914.
74. The spring festival celebrated in memory of Mahadeva. For other details, see Balfour, E., i, p. 286.
75. Qawa'id, p. 64.

Chapter 5

The Court Titles

It was an ancient historical tradition that after ascending the throne, the rulers adopted pompous and grand titles to express their power and grandeur. These titles played a constructive role in making royalty somewhat divine and sacred in the eyes of the people. Therefore, rulers carefully selected such titles which suited their personality in order to impress their subjects.

One significance of these titles was their religious expression. In the divine concept of kingship, the king was regarded either a representative of God (or god incarnate) on earth. Hence, such titles were adopted which were a sign of his superior position in order to make the people submissive and obedient. Moreover, these titles also showed the monarch's political power and strength, the extent of his empire and his hold on the resources. Such titles were reserved only for rulers. Princes or nobles were not allowed to adopt them.

When Muslims conquered Syria and Iraq, they not only acquired political power but also incorporated their social and cultural traditions in their structure. The Umayyad caliphs retained the Arab spirit despite the impact of the Byzantine and Persian civilisations, but when the Abbasids came to power, the Iranian nobility and bureaucracy became very influential at the court and converted the caliph as the absolute ruler on the model of the Sassanid king. The Abbasid caliphs started to assume such high and magnificent titles which showed their political and religious power.

Since then, Muslim rulers began to adopt such titles which were related to religion. Through these titles, they expressed their devotion to faith and posed themselves as its defenders and promoters. This was also done to elevate their status in the eyes of the people.

Moreover, titles were also adopted in view of political power. If the ruler made conquests and extended his empire, his titles portrayed him as a conqueror. If he built a great empire and used state resources for building monuments and took measures for the welfare of the people, his title showed his magnanimity and generosity. In some cases, these titles indicated some important personal characteristic of the ruler such as patron of the art and literature, proprietor of the poor or the dispenser of justice.

As long as the Abbasid caliphs remained powerful, the provincial governors obeyed their authority and out of respect did not adopt such titles which were reserved for the caliphs. But when the political power of the dynasty declined and the provincial governors assumed independence and acted as rulers, they, like other court ceremonies and etiquettes, assumed grand royal titles, especially those titles that presented them as defenders of religion and as holy warriors. At the same time they expressed their allegiance to the caliph, if only as a token. Sometimes they requested the caliph to award them a title in order to get recognition and legitimise their rule.

As long as the Abbasids remained in power, Muslim rulers did not adopt the titles of Amir al Muminin (leader of believers), Khalifa (deputy to the Holy Prophet PBUH) and Imam (prayer leader). The Abbasid caliph, besides these three, also adopted such titles which indicated some aspect of their character such as Safah (brutal), Mansur (conqueror), Mahdi (the expected one), and Hadi (the guide). Generally, their titles ended on billah or Aliallah (from God). On the basis of these titles they made the people believe that they derived their power from God.

Therefore, any opposition against them was tantamount to treason and against the will of the Almighty.

The titles adopted by the provincial governors indicated how, slowly and gradually, they were becoming independent from the caliphate. In the beginning they assumed the title of Amir (leader). Having this title the governor expressed his allegiance to the caliph. The second title which was assumed was Malak (king). As there was no tradition of kingship in the Muslim society, rulers were hesitant in adopting it.

However, later on, the Samanids, the Buids and the Ayubids adopted it. The third important title was Daula (state); it was bestowed by the caliph on provincial rulers. Then there were the titles which ended on Millah and Ummah (the Muslim community). Daula expressed secular character while Millah and Ummah had religious connotations. Muslim rulers began to assume both these titles to show their religious as well as political power.

Another important title ended on al-din (religion). In the early period it was awarded by the caliph to the provincial rulers but later on these rulers adopted it to assure their subjects that they were the defenders of religion. This gave rulers an effective tool to urge people to obey them.

Royal titles were an expression of the power and grandeur of the Mughul Emperors. These titles were adopted at the time of coronation or after some victory over an enemy. They were high sounding and rhythmical, and when announced by ushers (naqibs) they created an atmosphere of awe in the audience.

Titles of Emperors

Amir Timur (1370-1405), the founder of the Timurids, usurped power from the Chaghatat Khan, Tuhlug Timur (1359-70), and out of respect assumed the title of Amir(1), rather than khan, as was the practice among the

Mongol rulers(2). He legitimized his rule not by seeking the recognition of the Caliph, but by marrying the grand-daughter of Amir Kizghan, Aljaz Turkhan Agha, and by assuming the title of Gurgan (son in law). After him the Timurid rulers adopted the title of Mirza(3) and not of khan or Padshah, which were the titles of the Mongol, rulers. Babur was the first Timurid ruler who, after his conquest of Kabul (1507), assumed the title of Padshah and asserted his superiority over the Chaghatai and other Timurid rulers(4). The assumption of the title Padshah was significant in that it differed from Sultan, which was the title of the Osmanlis, and Shah, which was the title of the newly founded Safawi dynasty. Hence this title distinguished Babur and his successors from his two powerful rivals, Osmanli and Safawis.

After his victory over Rana Sanga (1527) on the battlefield of Kanwaha, Babur assumed the title of Ghazi "warrior of the faith". Thus Babur was styled Zahir al-Din (strengthener of the faith) Muhammad Babur Padshah Ghazi(5).

Humayun adopted the title of Nasir al-Din (Defender of the faith) Muhammad Humayun Padshah Ghazi. Akbar assumed the title of Jalal al-Din (Glory of the faith) Muhammad Akbar Padshah Ghazi. Prince Salim, at the time of his coronation, adopted the title, Nur al-Din (Light of the faith) Muhammad Jahangir (seizer of the world) Padshah Ghazi(6). Shahjahan, on his coronation, assumed the high titles Abu'l Muzaffar Sahib Qiran-i-thani(7) Shihab al-Din (Meteor of the faith) Shahjahan Padshah Ghazi(8). Alamgir, on his succession to the throne, adopted the title Abu'l Muzaffar Muhyi al-Din (Rejuvenator of the faith) Muhammad Aurangzeb (Alamgir) Padshah Ghazi(9).

To call or write the name of the emperor was regarded as disrespectful. He was referred to by short titles

like Zill Allah (Shadow of God), Alam Panah (Protector of the universe), and Jahan Panah (Protector of the world)(10).

Title of Prince and Princess

All princes were called sultan. Sometimes high titles were awarded to them as a reward for their achievements or to recognize their position at the court. Prince Khurram, after his victories in Rajputana and the Deccan, was given the title of Shahjahan by Jahangir. During the later years of his reign, when Shahjahan had decided that his elder son Dara Shikuh was to succeed him on the throne, he gave him the title of Shah Buland Iqbal.

Princesses were also given titles by the emperor. Under Shahjahan, Jahanara was given the title, Begam Sahib. Alamgir gave her the title, Badshah Begam; and the title Shah Begam was given to his younger sister, Roshanara Begam(11).

Titles of Queen

Queen Mothers had a high and respectful position in the palace. They were referred to by dignified titles. Akbar's mother, Queen Hamida Banu Begam, was called Mayam Makani(12).

Queens were also given titles. Mihr al-Nisa, after her marriage to Jahangir, was awarded the title, Nur Mahall (Light of the palace) and later on that of Nurjahan (Light of the world). Shahjahan's favourite wife, the mother of Dara, Shuja, Aurangzeb, and Murad, was called Mumtaz Mahall (the most distinguished in the palace).

Titles of Nobles

Nobles were awarded titles according to their performance in war and administration. At the time of his coronation, a new emperor bestowed titles on the nobles of his court, specially those who had supported his succession to the throne. The occasion on which titles were usually

awarded were the festival of Nauruz, the emperor's birthday, celebration, Id and other festivals. Occasionally titles were given, on the spot, for some feat of bravery and loyalty. For instance, Anup Ray, who fought against a tiger and saved the life of the emperor was given the title of Sang-dalan (Crusher of the Lion)(15). Ali Quli Istanjlu, in the service of prince Salim, when he attacked a lion and killed it with his sword, was given the title of Sher-Afgan (tiger-thrower) on the spot. Alamgir awarded the title of Fathnuma (Usher of Victory) to Mir Taqi for fighting recklessly against Dara Shikuh at Ajmer.

The titles were awarded according to the status of a man to the merits of his achievements. Usually the word khan used to be part of a titlet it was also added to the personal name as a title(17).

The highest titles which were conferred on nobles were Khankhanan (the Lord of Lords), Khan Azam (the Great Lord), Khan Jahan (the Lord of the World), Khanzaman (the Great Lord), Amir al-Umara (the Noble of Nobles), and Ray Rayan (the Great of Greats)(18).

The nobles in the Mughul court were primarily warriors and military commanders. They earned their honours on battlefields. Their titles, therefore, referred to their courage and prowess in war, like the titles of Sahbaz Khan (Brave), Mahabat Khan (Awe), Tahawwur Khan (Impetuous), Dilawar Khan (Brave), Lasbkar Khan (Army), Himmat Khan (Courageous), Saif Khan (Sword), Bahadur Khan (Bold), Shuja'at Khan (Brave) and Ghazi Khan (Warrior of the Faith). The titles awarded to some of the nobles and mansabdars referred to some particular aspects of their personality like the titles: Muruwwat Khan (Virtue, Chivalry), Diyanat Khan (Piety), Mukhlis Khan and Ikhlas Khan (Sincere), I'timad Khan (Trusted), and Dindar Khan (Religious).

Every government official at the Mughul court was called Mansabdar. Only when his rank reached higher than

panjsadi (the rank of the commander of 5000 cavalry) did he enter the nobility. All mansabdars in the Mughul court were awarded honours for their achievements in their particular relevant fields. Their titles, therefore, referred to their profiency in their professional works, for instance physicians in the Mughul court were given titles like Hakim al-Mulk and Hakim Masiha (physician like Christ). Sometimes the titles awarded referred to the functionary job of a mansabdar, like the titles Naqib Khan (Usher), and Naubat Khan (Chief of Naubat Khana)(19).A few more high titles of the Mughul court were Itimad al-Daula (Trust of the state); Asaf al-Daula (Asaf of the state), Jumlat al-Mulk (Totality of the state) and Firuzjang (Victorious in the battle). The first was given by Jahangir to his father in law Ghiyath Beg, who served him as a wazir (Diwan), and the second was awarded by Shahjahan to his father-in-law Abul-Hasan, who had already titles like Asaf Khan, Alamgir's wazir (Diwan for a long time was Asad Allah Khan, entitled Jumlat al-Mulk, and his great military commander was entitled Firuzjang. Some of the Mughul wazirs were given the title Asaf the traditional name of the wazir of King Solomon of the Old Testament. This high title was therefore, given to the wazir, who was the chief and the finance minister under the Mughul. Akbar bestowed this title on three of his wazirs. (Diwans): Abd al-Majid, Khwaja Mirza Ghiyath al-Din Ali, and Mirza Jafar Beg. Jahangir awarded this title to his wazir, Abul Hasan, the brother of Nurjahan(20).The title of Sahib-i-Saif Wa-qalam (Captain of the sword and of the Pen) was awarded to a person equally distinguished in war and administration. Jahangir gave this title to Shaikh Farid(21).

Titles of Calligraphers

Similarly, the great calligraphers in the Mughul court were given titles referring to the beauty of their hand, like Shirin Qalam i.e. the writing of whose pen is sweet to

observe, (shirin means "sweet")(22). Ambarin Qalam i.e. one whose pen writing is as fragrant as Ambar (ambergris is of a black colour like the shining black ink which the Mughul calligraphers used). Zarrin Qalam, i.e. one whose pen writing is shining and precious like gold (Zarrin means "gold")(23).

Titles of Musicians

It was in the Mughul court that the musicians from Central Asia, Iran, and India were gathered together. The music of these countries mingled together and contributed to new developments. The most prominent musicians of the court were, however, Indian musicians. Hindus and Muslims carried on the traditions of the Hindu rags and used Indian instruments. The titles awarded to musicians referred to their proficiency in music and to their playing some particular instrument. Indian or otherwise, like Surgian Khan (expert of the music), Sarud Khan (a kind of guitar), Tantraq Khan (musician), Sur Mandal Khan (halo of the music), and Pur Bin Khan (flute)(24).

Some other Titles

The great painters and engineers of the Mughul court also enjoyed the emperor's favour and were rewarded with rich gifts, robes of honour and titles. Jahangir gave the title, Nadir al- Zaman (Unique of the Time), to the chief painter of his court(25). Shanjahan awarded to Ustad Ahmad of Lahore, the builder of the Taj and the Red fort of Shahjahanabad, the title Nadir al-Asr (Unique of the Age). The poet Laureat in the Mughul court was entitled Malik al-Shu'ara(26).

References

1. Vambery, A.: *A History of Bokhara*. London 1873-Repr. New York 1973, p. 167.
2. Khan was derived from Kaghan (Arabic Khaqan). It was the title of Turks, Chazar and Toghuz-Oghuz rulers (see al-Biruni: *The Chronology of Ancient Nations*, tr. by Sachau, C.E. Frankfurt 1967, p. 109). The supreme rulers of the Mongols also assumed the title of Kaghan. The Khan, later on, became the title of Mongol rulers in Persia. In India the Sultans of Delhi and the Mughul emperors awarded this title to their nobility.
3. Mirza, Persian title derived from Mir-zada, meaning "born of a prince".
4. *Baburnama*, p. 344.
5. Ghani, A.M.: *A History of Persian Language and Literature at the Mughul Court*. Allahabad 1929, i, pp. 4, 146-48. On the titles composed of "Din", see Ibn Khaldun: *Muqaddimah* (tr. by.F. Rosenthal). New York 1958, i, p. 469. Kramers, J.H.: *Le noms musalmans composes avec Din*. In: Acta Orientalia. 5. 1926-27, pp. 53-67. Dietrich, A.: *Zu den mit ad-din zusammenge- setzen islamischen Personennamen*. In: ZDMG 110. 1960, pp. 43-54.
6. Tuzuk, i, p. 3.
7. Shahjahan adopted the title of Sahib Qiran as a result of his victories following the tradition of Amir Timur, who was known as Sahib Qiran (Lord of the happy conjuction i.e. Jupiter and Venus).
8. Salih, i, p. 259.
9. Kazim, p. 367.

10. Najib Ashraf Nadwi: *Muqaddima Ruqqa'at-i-Alamgiri*. Azamgarh n.d., p. 19.
11. Mustaidd, p. 213.
12. Virtuous and chaste like Mary, mother of Christ.
13. Mary of the time, chaste like Mary.
14. Majestic like Queen Bilqis of Shiba.
15. *Tuzuk*, i, pp , 187-88.
16. Ibid., p. 114.
17. *Tuzuk*, i, pp. 14, 160, 346.
18. *Baburnama*, p. 537. *Qawa'id*, p. 49. *Tuzuk*, i, p. 14.
19. *Tuzuk*, i, p. 111.
20. *A' in*, i, 232. Bada'uni, ii, p , 170. Tuzuk, i, pp. 260, 278.
21. Ibid., p. 13. cf., Goldziher, I.: Uber Dualtitel. In: WZKM 13. 1899. pp. 321-29.
22. *Akbarnama*, iii, p. 227. Bada'uni, ii, p. 310. Ma'athir al-Umara', ii, p. 625. Tuzuk, i, 15.
23. *A' in*, i, pp, 113-15.
24. *A'in*, i, pp. 263-64. Mu'tamad, pp. 308, 311. Lahauri, ii, p. 351.
25. Tuzuk, ii, pp , 98-99.
26. *A'in*, i, p. 235.

Chapter 6

The Royal Awards and Charities

At the time of festivals and other celebrations, the Emperor used to award honours and gifts to princes, royal ladies, nobles, officials, foreign ambassadors, envoys and others. The princes, besides receiving honours and awards for their services as high nobles at the court and military commanders, received gifts from the Emperor. Royal princesses and other ladies of the harem also received awards and gifts on the occasion of festivals, court celebrations on their marriage, and on the birth of their children.

Gifts were also awarded in appreciation of bravery, courage, and good performance in some field. Cash remained always at the disposal of the king for the purpose of awards. Gifts were bestowed for discussions, poetical contests, music, and in other fields, to those who gave the best performance. Sometimes somebody won a gift by making some intelligent remark. Gifts were also awarded after a successful expedition and a victory(1). The recovery of the Emperor from some illness was another occasion for the bestowal of gifts.

The purpose of these elaborate ceremonies of awards and gifts was to show the favour of the king to his servants and to recognize their services, to encourage them, and create an atmosphere of competition.

There were different categories of honours and awards which were bestowed according to the status of the recipient. Some of the honours were reserved only for the princes and nobles of the first order. The Aftabgir (Parasol)

was bestowed only to princes, for instance Jahangir conferred it on prince Parwez(2). The Naqqara (kettledrum) was bestowed on princes and those nobles who had at least a mansab of 2000 suwars (holding of the rank of the Commandant of 2000 cavalry). When it was bestowed, the person, after receiving it, put it on his back. It was always given with some reservations, e.g. that it should not be beaten in the presence of the Emperor or at a fixed distance from the royal palace. Even princes were not allowed to violate these conditions. After the conferment of the Naqqara on Nurjahan, Jahangir allowed it to be beaten after the royal kettledrum(3). The Mani-Maratib (4)was awarded to the princes' and nobles when they had attained at least the mansab of 1200 suwar. Sometimes an exception was made in rare cases, for instance Alamgir conferred it on Nusrat Jang as a high favour(5). The Tumantugh, or the standard of yak-tail, and other flags were awarded to princes and mansabdars of not less than 5000 suwar on their performing excellent services(6). To be awarded an elephant from the Khassa (elephants which were reserved for the use of the emperor) with its full equipment was regarded as a great honour.

There were many categories of Robes of honour(7), or Khil'at, which were awarded according to the status of the recipient and the merit of his services. Khil'ats consisted of three, five, six, and seven pieces. The khil'at of three pieces consisted of a turban, a long coat with jama (skirt), and a kamarband (belt for the waist). The khil'at of five pieces consisted of a sarpech(8), a band to tie round the turban known as the Balaband, and a tight jacket with short sleeves known as nim-astin (half sleeves). The khil'at of seven pieces consisted of a turban, a Qaba (gown), a fitting coat, two pairs of trousers, two shirts, two girdles, and a scarf for the head or neck(9). There was a kind of robe called the Nadri, which was the innovation of Jahangir(10). Robes of honour were distributed twice a year, in winter,

and in the rainy season, besides on other occasions(11). It was regarded as a great honour when the Emperor bestowed his own dress on somebody(12). The Daghu was a warm mantle and was awarded on special occasions. Akbar bestowed the daghu dress and Fathi dresses, after the fall of Bairam Khan on Atka Khan(13). The Sarapa was a dress consisting of all cloths from head to foot. The person who received the robe of honour was supposed to come to the court wearing it for three days(14).

Sarpech was awarded to those who had the rank of 4000 (holding of the rank of the commandant of 4000 Cavalry). Sometimes, as a special favour, it was conferred on the children of nobles, for instance Alamgir awarded a Yamani sarpech to the child of Muhammad Amin Khan(15). Recipients of the award were not allowed to wear it on any day, except Sunday. They were forbidden to make a similar sarpech for daily use(16).

For decoration of the turban there were different kinds of aigrettes, known as Kulghi or jigha. As an honour jigha or kulghi were awarded to the nobles of the court in recognition of their services. It was considered a great honour when sometimes the Emperor awarded his own turban to a noble. For instance Jahangir awarded his turban to his father-in-law, Itimad al-Daula, as a mark of honour(17).

The giving of a horse from the royal stable as an award was also regarded as an honour. Jahangir viewed his horses daily, and thirty were taken for presentation to nobles and others(18). Jahangir and Shahjahan started to give their portraits to their nobles as a gift. Roe saw some nobles wearing the king's image around their necks(19). Simple or autograph letters sent by the Emperor to princes or nobles were regarded as a great honour, and the letter was received with utmost respect and ceremony(20). Rings of diamond, ruby, emerald, and sapphire were given as a

gift. Sometimes the title of the person was engraved on it(21).

A newly appointed Wazir (Diwan) was given a jeweled Qalam and Qalamdan (pen and inkstand) as a symbol if his Wizarat(22). The Asa-i-Murassa (Ornamented Staff) was given to Amir-i-Tuzuk (Master of Ceremonies) as a symbol of his authority(23).

Books were given to the nobles as a royal favour from the royal library. Jahangir gave copies of his Memoirs to Shanjahan I'timad al-Daula, prince Parwez and others. When visiting Allahabed, Emperor Jahangir presented to some 'ulama' the Tafsir-i-Kashshaf by Zamakhshari, the Tafsir-i-Husaini by Husain Kashifi, and Raudat-al-Ahbab by Amir Jamal al-Din from the royal library(24).

The Emperor sent some of his nobles a part of the animals which he had hunted. Sometimes he sent to his favourite nobles dishes and fruits from the royal table. In summer, ice brought for the Emperor from the Northern mountains was given to his favourite nobles(25).

Sometimes the Emperor gave away the entire pishkash presented to him on a certain day to a favourite person; for instance Jahangir, once on the occasion of Ṇauruz, gave away the entire pishkash to Hafiz Nad-i-Ali, end another occasion he gave away the pishkash on a Monday to Mahmud Abdar(26).

The poets, musicians, singers, and story-tellers were weighed against gold, silver, or rupees in appreciation of their performances by the order of the Emperor, and money was given away to them as a royal gift. Sometimes their mouths were filled once or twice with pearls, and the pearls were given to them in appreciation of their achievement. During the time of, Jahangir, Mulla Asad, the story-teller, poet Sa'ida and Muhammad Nayi, the flute player, were weighed against gold and rupees(27).

When the Mughul nobles were awarded great honours like titles, high mansabs or received promotion to a

high post or command, they were mostly awarded in addition jagirs (fiefs), and an elephant, along with its equipment and ornaments, horses with jewelled golden or silvery trappings and costly saddles, jewelled swords and shields.

Besides the bestowal of titles robes of honour, naqqara, banners, and other things, the Mughul Emperors awarded to their nobles and other officials jewelled daggers, bows and quivers, jewellery like Pohnchi (golden Bangles), armlet, kara (a kind of bangle), and pearl necklaces; golden and silver trays, cups, plates, panden (golden betel box), and bottles studded with precious stones; costly shawls of different kinds, rumals (handkerchiefs), tasbih (rosary), and perfumes (28).

The Charities

Mughul Emperors not only awarded costly presents and gifts to their nobles, commanders and other courtiers, but had also a soft heart for the poor subject. They distributed largesse on the ocassion of festivals and gave away charities with an open hand on every possible occasion. The Emperor also tried to provide food and lodging for the poor, the needy and travellers, especially during the time of drought and famine.

At festivals, trays full of gold and silver were raised moved around the head of the Emperor and then the money was distributed among the poor. The ceremony was called Nithar. It was thought to avert all evils on all occasions(29). Moreover, whenever the Emperor went out in procession for Id prayer, or to visit the tombs of saints and his ancestors, he scattered money among the crowd of people who assembled to see the procession. Scattering of money in India was regarded as an act of generosity and was highly appreciated by the common people. Jahangir mentions several times in his Memoirs about his scattering coins(30).

On the birth of a prince, or a marriage in the royal family, money was distributed among the people. On the marriage of prince Parwez, nine thousand rupees were handed over by the Emperor to Sharif-Amuli and other nobles to be distributed in alms to poor people(31).

When Jahanara was severely burnt, alms and charity were given to the poor; sixty thousand rupees were distributed on the first day, and for three days five thousand muhrs (a gold currency) and five thousand rupees were given in alms. One thousand rupees were distributed daily till her recovery(32).

Akbar always had cash at his disposal and gave something to every beggar(33). On his return from Kabul, Akbar gave a gold coin piece to every one of about 300 poor people on the way(34). Once Akbar filled a tank called Anuptalao at Fathpursikri with coins which were distributed among his courtiers and the poor(35).

The Mughul Emperors, on the ocassion of Hajj, used to send a large sum of money to Hijaz. Akbar on one occasion sent six lakh rupees and 12,000 khil'ats to be distributed among the officials of the sacred cities, the 'ulama' and the poor(36).

The Emperor gave charity on the days of solar and lunar eclipse, and on the appearance of a long-tail meteor. The occasions were regarded as ominous for the Emperor, and when they occurred Jahangir used to weigh himself against gold, silver, cloths, and grains, which were distributed among the poor(37).

Jahangir used to give alms to the poor through the 'ulams'. He instructed mace-bearers and other officers to collect widows and needy people from nearby villages when he was on a march. They were brought before him and he himself distributed money. Once he bestowed 55,000 rupees, 190,000 bighas of land 14 villages, 11,000 asses' load of rice to darwishes(38).

Shahjahan distributed charity on the birthday of the Prophet of Islam, on Mi'raj (when the prophet went to heaven), during the month of Ramadan, and in the days of Muharram. He also distributed 50,000 rupees every year on the death anniversary of his favourite wife, Mumtaz Mahall(39).

It was an old tradition to establish Alms houses (langar khana), where poor people and travellers could get free food. Mughul Emperors founded such houses throughout their Empire at state expense. Such houses were increased in the time of famine or drought(40). Akbar built such houses at Fathpur for poor Muslims and Hindus. They were known as Khairpurah and Dharampurah. A large number of Hindu jogis began to come to the capital when they smelled free food. A separate house was built for them known as a Jogipurah(41). Jahangir established such houses at Ahmadabad, Allahabad, Lahore, Delhi, and Agra. These places were called Bulghar khana (place for the distribution of cooked food for the poor). Once he gave three thousand rupees to the Bulghar khana in Kashmir(42). Shahjahan founded a during the famine in different cities, specially Burhanpur. Alamgir founded ten in the capital and twelve in the suburbs(43).

References

1. *Baburnama*, p. 522.
2. Tuzuk, i, p. 74. Irvine, W.: *The Army of the Indian Mughuls*. London 1903, p. 34.
3. Tuzuk, ii, p. 228. Khwafi Khan, i, p. 430. Irvine, p. 30. Sharma, S.R.: *Mughul Government and Administration*. Bombay 1951, pp. 115-16.
4. The fish was the symbol of royalty in ancient Persia. It was introduced by Khusru Perwez (591-628). It was a standard consisting of a fish of four feet in length which was fixed on a shaft.
5. *Letters of the Emperor Aurangzeb*. tr. by Joseph Earles. Calcutta 1788, p. 15.
6. *Baburnama*, p. 372. Elliot & Dowson, v, p. 364.
7. Sharma, S.R., pp. 115-16. Irvine, W., p. 33. To award the khil'at (robe of honour) was an old Persian tradition. Cf. Huart, C.: *Ancient Persia and Iranian Civilization*. tr. by R. Dobie. London 1927, p. 148. For further details, see the article Khilfat in EI 2.
8. The sarpech was a band of golden cloth two or two and a half cubits long; studded with square pieces of gold close to each other and embriodered with pearls and diamonds before the turban.
9. Tavernier, p. 18. Irvine, p. 29.
10. Tuzuk, ii, p. 191.
11. Ibid., p. 97. Sharma, S.R., p. 99.
12. See Manucci on the award of the Malbus-i-Khass, ii. p. 469: "which signify that he loves him as he does his own person". Roe, p. 334.
13. *Akbarnama*, ii, pp. 174-75.

14. Ssrkar, p. 85.
15. *Letters of the Emperor Aurangzeb*, p. 22: "His late majesty also gave one to the son of Sadik Khan; but when he was grown up and arrived at the age of discretion he forbade him to wear it".
16. Ibid., p. 48.
17. Tuzuk, ii, p. 378.
18. Ibid., pp. 16, 25.
19. Qawa'id, p. 48. Roe, pp. 244-5.
20. Athar Ali: *The Mughul Nobility under Aurangzeb*. London 1966, p. 142.
21. Tuzuk, ii, pp. 1-2. Letters of the Emperor Aurangzeb, p. 19: "The Emerald Ring bestowed last night upon Khan Bahader Cheen, is a plain one. I design now to give him one with the title of Cheen Kulich Khan Bahader, engraved on it".
22. Tuzuk, i, p. 103. Salih, i, p. 310.
23. Ibid., ii, p. 411.
24. Tuzuk, i, pp. 339-40., ii, pp. 27, 37,70.
25. Bayazid Bayat: *Memoirs of Baizid (Bayazid)*. In: Allahabad University Studies, xi, part i, 1930, p. 146. Qawa'id, p. 45. Monserrate, p. 64. Cf. Tod, J., i, p. 254: The Rajput rulers used to send food to their favouri te nobles from the royal kitchen. It was called "dauna".
26. Tuzuk, i, p. 317., ii, p. 86.
27. Ibid., i, p. 377., ii, p. 30. Lahauri, i, pp. 142, 341. Salih, ii, pp. 88-89. Muhammad Nayi composed a tune for an ode in the name of Jahangir, who reports this event in his Memoirs, i, p. 376: "On the 19th I ordered him to be weighed against rupees; this came to 6.300 rupees. I also gave him an elephant with howda, and I ordered him to ride on it and, having packed his rupees about him, to proceed to his lodging". To fill the mouth with pearls, rubies, and

gold coins was an old Persian tradition. For further details, see Huart, C., p. 148.

28. *Akbarnama*, iii, p. 831. Salih, ii, p. 411.
29. Khwafi Khan, ii, p. 107. Compare the Rajput ceremony called Nachravali (Tod, J., i, p. 491).
30. Tuzuk, i, pp. 105, 121, 139, 191,363 435.
31. Ibid., p , 81.
32. Salih, ii, p. 401. Lahauri, ii, pp. 354, 394, 395, 400.
33. A1in, i, p. 197. Blochmann, 266: "There is a treasure always waiting at the Court; and every beggar when His Majesty sees him, is sure to find relief".
34. Monserrate, p. 155.
35. *Akbarnama*, iii, p. 257-58. Elliot & Dowson v, p. 409: "There was a reservoir in the court-yard of the palace at Fathpur, twenty gaz long by twenty broad and three gaz deep. This he caused to be filled with red, white, and black money (i:e. gold, silver, and copper), the whole of which he gave away to the amirs, the poor, the holy, and the learned. The total of this money amounted to twenty karors, and the distribution of it lasted for three years.
36. *Akbarnama*, iii, p. 192.
37. Tuzuk, i, pp. 160, 172, 183.
38. Ibid., pp. 279, 440, ii, p. 8.
39. Salih, i, p. 289. Lahauri, ii, pp. 354, 394, 400.
40. Akbarnama, iii, p. 262.
41. Bada'uni, ii, p. 324.
42. Tuzuk, i, pp. 75, 77, 204.
43. Salih, i, p. 421. Lahauri, ii, 363, 472, 489, 632. Elliot & Dowson, vii;. p. 264.

Chapter 7

The Mughul Pagent

The spectacle of the grandest splendour of the Mughul Emperors was their court with all its festivals and celebrations. The other pageant of their glory were their processions.

The Processions

When the Emperor went out from his palace, he was accompanied by all the royal paraphernalia: standards, weapons, music, well-equipped elephants, horses, and camels, dignified nobility, and uniformed soldiery. These processions displayed the power and richness of the Emperor, and were used as an instrument to impress the people, and create a deep loyalty for the royal dynasty. The personality of the Emperor emerged as invincible and majestic, which gave a sense of pride in having such a mighty and glorious ruler.

These processions were organized on the festivals of Id al-Fitr and Id al-Adha, on every Friday, when the Emperor went to the mosque for Friday prayer, and on his return to the capital from outside.

Before a procession mace-bearers (yassawuls) and other officers made thorough arrangements: the roads were cleared, all shops, doors, and walls on the route of the procession were 'decorated, and small tents and canopies were erected to entertain the people by offering drinks and sweets.

The Emperor was mounted on an elephant in his throne fixed on its back. This was covered by the chatr

(umbrella) or the aftabgir (awning), and behind him stood two or three of nobles bearing Chauris (fly-musker) in their hands. The Emperor distributed a great amount of money which was scattered from his seat among the waiting poor.

The Royal conveyance was followed by the royal Qur, consisting of royal weapons: daggers, bows and arrows, quivers, swords, shield, spears, and matchlocks. It was carried by the sons of nobility.

The procession was attended by notable nobles, yassawuls, court officials, and devoted servants (chelas) who were the Emperor's personal slaves, wearing rings in their ears as a symbol of love and loyalty(1). It was followed by elephants with golden hanging, an embroidered cloth on their backs, some of which bore symbols of royalty and imperial standards, like the sun, stars, and figures of a lion or dragon(2).

The procession was followed by a royal conveyançe like the takht-i-rawan (moving throne), different types of thrones, palkis, (palanquins) and bullock chariots, which were supervised by the Mir-Tuzuk (master of ceremonies). Then came servants carrying trays of precious stones on their heads and ornamented staffs in their hands. They were followed by yassawuls, supervising the organization of the procession. From the royal palace to the destination there stood soldiers on both sides of the road(3).

It was the tradition that when the Emperor rode on an elephant, nobles followed him on horseback; when he was on horseback or in a palki (palanquin), nobles used to follow on foot except those who were specially exempted by the Emperor(4).

In every procession the Emperor was attended upon by his bodyguard consisting of 500 or 600 armed men, and nearly 300 or 400 matchlockmen(5).

There is a miniature painted by Manohar(6), beautifully depicting a procession of Jahangir; musicians sitting on elephants playing trumpets, turhi (clarion), nafiri

(brazen trumpet) and beating drums. In front of them were royal standards with the sun, dragons, and other banners, gunmen with wrapped guns in their hands, behind them again some elephants carrying men and women singing songs of praise of the Emperor. The whole procession is controlled by the master of ceremonies (Mir Tuzuk). There is also a small group of buffoons entertaining people by their movements and tricks(7).

Peter Mundy observed the procession of Shahjahan, when he returned from Burhanpur to his capital in 1632. First, there were twenty royal, conveyances like the takht-i-rawan, palki (palanquin), and others; then there were a thousand horsemen riding in close rank. This was followed by nineteen or twenty elephants, richly decorated and covered with velvet and carrying royal insignia. One of the elephants carried an Amari (housing) for the royal use; it was covered with an awning of rich cloth and was supported with golden pillars. It was followed by ushers having golden staffs in their hands, controlling the procession and clearing the way. Then came the Emperor riding on a dark grey horse. He was accompanied by Mahabat Khan, and Dara Shikuh rode at some distance from the Emperor. All the nobles were walking on foot on both sides. At a fixed distance were armed soldiers with spears in their hands. They were followed by great numbers of elephants belonging to the nobles. The procession created a most majestic and delightful sight(8). This was the usual order of the procession, although there were sometimes a few alterations.

When the Emperor went out for a long journey, the procession marched in order. At a short distance in front of the Emperor were drummers and trumpeters mounted on elephants and playing music. Then came cavalry followed by elephants. Royal ladies travelled in howdas(9) placed on elephants, while lady-servants rode on camels. They were followed by elephants carrying royal insignia and different

flags, and then were nine well-equipped horses. The Emperor was surrounded by his servants, who kept the people away and sprinkled water before him to put down the dust(10).

References

1. Cf. Tuzuk, i, pp. 267-68.
2. Bernier, p. 371.
3. Qawa'id, pp. 67-68. Manucci, ii, pp. 71-72.
4. Peter Mundy, p. 199. Tavernier, p. 308. Ovington, pp. 194-97.
5. Tavernier, p. 311.
6. Percy, B.: *Indian Painting under the Mughuls.* Oxford 1924, plate No. xxxi.
7. Ibid., p. 130.
8. Peter Mundy, pp. 193-94.
9. A litter on the back of an elephant or camel.
10. Monserrate. p.79. On the procession of Shahjahan (1638), see Ogilby, pp. 160-61: "King Choram went from Agra to Lahore, with his whole Court, in the following manner; viz. First came the Chanceller Asaf Khan, Lord of the five thousand Horses, sitting on a Cabbin howda plated over with silver, on a Female Elephant. Next came Agachan, (a) Eunuch, Governor of Agra, sitting likewise on a Female elephant, and accompanied by four hundred Horses, and many footman... Then a great number of Horses and Footmen making room, were follow'd by the king, sitting in room of massiv gold, carried by a great Elephant, on which also, before hi, sate his eldest son Ammurath box (Murad Baskhsh)...who fanned the king to keep off the Flies...Round about him rode... Nobles, they were followed thirty elephants, who carry'd the King's Drummers. Pipers, and other Musick".

Chapter 8

The Royal Recreations

The Outdoor Pastimes

The outdoor pastimes of the Mughul Emperors were also on a grand scale. They provided them with an opportunity to know the grievances of the people and helped them to understand political, social, and religious problems. They enabled them to meet their nobles and courtiers on a social level, free from the restrictions of the formal court etiquette, and know their minds better; also to approach under a pretext a territory wherein rebellious intentions of a provincial governor were suspected and to have direct contact with their subjects and local soldiery to strengthen their allegiance direct to their sovereign without the agency of the provincial governor. They could hear the grievances of their subjects and give justice on the spot; and get to know the economic conditions of various parts of their dominion.

The Royal Hunt

The most important outdoor pastime was the royal hunt, which was also the best means to know about the condition in the country outside the capital. Akbar was very fond of hunting. He went out so often that he gave the impression that he was more interested in hunting than in state business. But in doing so, as Abul-Fadl says, he pursues higher aims(1).

He used his hunting many times to solve political problems. When he wanted to throw off the yoke of Bairam

Khan, he went out of Agra on the pretext of hunting, and from the hunting ground galloped off to Delhi where Queen dowger Hamida Banu Begam and many courtiers were organizing an attempt to put an end to the Great Regeant, Bairam Khan. Similarly when he learnt about the rebellion of Abd Allah Khan Uzbeg, the governor of Malwa, he left the capital on the pretext of hunting elephants in the jungle of Malwa(2).

There were many hunting areas (shikargahs) reserved for Emperors throughout the Empire. No one, not even the princes, were allowed to hunt there without royal permission(3). "As this was one of my fixed hunting places", writes Jahangir, "and there was an order that no one should hunt in the neighbourhood(4)".

The officials who arranged the royal hunt were known as Mir Shikar(5), Qush Begi(6), and Qarawals(7). Before a royal hunt Qarawals made all the preparations(8). On his arrival for the hunt, the Emperor, along with the royal Qur and his nobles, first stayed at five kos distance from the hunting grounds; behind them stood the Mir Tuzuk; and about a kos and half away were stationed the servants (Khidmatiyyahs). Only some favourite nobles were allowed to march along with the Emperor though at a fixed distance. Finally he went along or with one or two nobles(9).

When the Emperor went hunting it was announced by trumpets and the beating of drums(10). Sometimes ladies accompanied him in the hunt(11).

There were strict orders that no one should approach the Emperor and his hunting party. The purpose was to avoid the crowd of curious onlookers and traitors, if any, and to prevent wild animals from being frightened away(12).

During the hunt the Emperor remained seated on an elephant; on his return he used a palki (palanquin)(13). A royal hunting party consisted of one or two thousand

men(14) and a hunt some times lasted a week and sometimes a month, depending on the whim of the Emperor.

The writer (waqia-nawis) recorded all games which was killed by the emperor, with all particulars such as the type and the name of the gun which was used for instance with the Sangram, Akbar killed one thousand and nineteen animals on different occasion(15). Jahangir records the number of animals which he killed on different occasions(16).

As the Indian summer is very hot, the best season for hunting was from November till the end of March(17).

Mughul Emperors were very good huntsmen. At Nawar, Akbar killed a tiger with a sword(18). Jahangir was a very good shot, and once shot eighteen deer(19). On another occasion he asked his guest, Karan-Singh, where he would like the tiger shot. Karn indicated the eyes, and Jahangir, in spite of the wind and the instability of the elephant, shot it in the eye(20). Shahjahan killed forty black deer by his gun, Ban (Chief of Lord)(21).

The Qamargah

The royal hunt, arranged on a large scale under the Great Mughuls, was known as Qamargah (ring-hunt). The Qamargah was a royal prerogative, and neither the highest nobles of the court nor even a favourite prince was allowed to hunt in this manner. When the Emperor wished to have a Qamargah hunt the Mir Shikar hired thousands of men to frighten away various kinds of wild animals from all sides to a central area by beating drums and shouting. The area was surrounded by a canvas-wall guarded by armed men. When all the animals were gathered together and all the arrangements had been perfected, the Emperor would enter the Qamargah ground with a few selected nobles and start to hunt. While the Emperor himself hunted the animals, no one else was allowed to do so. After him some nobles were

allowed to hunt, and then all the others were allowed to do so(22).

When Akbar was at Lahore (1567), he ordered a Qamargah hunt. Fifty thousand beaters were employed to drive the animals, and a wide space was selected for the hunt. For one month animals and birds were driven to this Place(23). It was the greatest hunt that had ever taken place. According to Bada'uni nearly 15,000 wild animals were collected in the arena. First the Emperor hunted the animals, then the nobles and in the end general permission was given(24).

Another method of hunting was Shakhband (tying together of horns or branches) in which a circle was made and animals were hurdled in it(25). The Haka was another kind of hunt in which animals were brought within the range of the Emperor's gun(26).

The Big Cat Hunt

Hunting the lion was a royal prerogative, and could only be done after gaining royal permission(27). Whenever the Emperor wanted to hunt a lion or tiger, the wherabouts of such a beast was discovered by the officials of the royal hunt. The part in which the animal was at the time was surrounded by men, and it was driven out by beating drums and shouts towards the place where the Emperor was ready for the kill.

When the Emperor came for the lion hunt, he sat in an uncovered howda of an elephant with his gun. These elephants were specially trained for lion hunting and were fully equipped against any danger. Their heads were covered with thick leather studded with sharp nails(28).

The killing of a lion or a tiger was regarded as a significant occasion. The dead lion was brought into the presence of the Emperor. It was minutely viewed by officers, and measured. Afterwards an account of the dead lion was written down including its size, colour, hairs,

teeth, and claws, the time when it was killed, and the name of the king who killed it(29). People took it as an auspicious sign when the Emperor killed a lion(30).

Hunting by Cheetahs

Hunting by trained cheetahs (leopard of kind trained to hunt deer) was an old Indian tradition. Akbar was enthusiastic about hunting deer by trained cheetahs. The royal cheetahs, trained for hunting, were divided into eight categories according to their qualities. While on their march to the hunting ground, mounted on horseback or carried in carriages, their legs were tied and a conical leather cap, like spectacles, was tied round their eyes. When a deer was sighted a cheetah was untied, its eyes were uncovered and it was set free on the animal so that a wonderful chase began.

The royal cheetahs in the cheetah khana used to have brocade saddle cloths, golden chains studded with jewels, a blanket in winter to cover them, and a carpet to sit on.

Each and every cheetah was given a personal name. If a cheetah performed some extra-ordinary feat of hunting, it was awarded honours by the Emperor; for instance, once when Akbar was hunting, a cheetah called Chitranjan, chasing a deer, jumped and caught the deer in the air and brought it down. For its extra-ordinary show of agility, Akbar installed the cheetah as the king of cheetahs and ordered drums to be beaten before its carriage whenever it moved(31).

Hawking

The Mughul Emperors were also fond of hawking. They had a number of trained birds of prey(32). These birds would hunt quails, partridges, geese, cranes, bustards, and even hares and small deer(33).

The Elephant Fight

To witness elephant fights was an old Indian royal tradition. It provided pleasure spiced with the sensation of possible danger. To hold an elephant fight was a royal prerogative, and none of the nobility nor princes were allowed to hold an elephant fight. The Emperor restricted the holding of elephant fights, due to the loss of life usually involved in this entertainment - the Mahawat (elephant's driver) killed in the combat and the spectators trampled down by the vanquished fleeing beast pursued by the triumphant one.

Elephant fights took place in a vast and open ground under the balcony (Jharoka) at the capital. There were no fixed days for fighting. They could be held whenever the Emperor liked. The fight took place either in the morning or afternoon(34).

When there was a severe fight, the elephants were separated by fireworks, which caused a loud noise and much smoke, forcing them to separate from each other. One such instrument which caused fire was known as a Charkhi (35).

When there was a fight between two elephants, a third elephant called a Tabancha stayed to assist the weak one. In one elephant fight, during the reign of Akbar, between prince Salim's elephant, Giranbar, and his son Khusru's Abrup, the duty of the tabancha was performed by an elephant called Rantahman(36).

Elephants' tusks were covered with brass to avoid the danger of breaking each other's tusks in the fight(37). The servants of the elephants' stable (Filkhana) were strictly prohibited from giving any intoxicant to an elephant to make it Must(38) for the fight(39). It was the tradition that an elephant was only set to fight its equal(40).

After the fight, the vanquished animal used to flee from the arena and the triumphant one to chase it. Once an

elephant fight between Hawa'i, mounted by Akbar himself, and Ran Bhaga took place. In this fight Hawa'i overcame Ran Bhaga who then fled from the arena. Pursued by Hawa'i, Ran Bhaga ran towards the bank of Jumna, stepped on the bridge of boats over the river and began to cross it. Hawa'i also rushed towards the bank and stepped onto the bridge of boats. The bridge was submerged and shaken, but fortunately it did not break(41).

An elephant fight was like a death sentence for the Mahawat (elephant' driver). In view of the danger to their lives, their wives and children used to say farewell to the mahawats before every fight(42). But at the same time the Emperor awarded gifts and cash when it was over.

Elephant fights involved risks not only for the Mahawats but also for spectators as the vanquished elephant, pursued by the triumphant elephant would rush towards them. In one of the elephant fights which Emperor Shahjahan was watching with his princes and courtiers, the Elephant Sidhkar was matched against the elephant called Sundar. At the end of the fighting, Sidhkar rushed towards the place where the Emperor was seated. When the brute approached the assembly, everyone there remained dumb and motionless with fear, except prince Aurangzeb, who though only 14 years of age spurred his horse forward and attacked the beast with his lance. By this time officials of the Filkhana and others approached the spot and controlled the beast, but Shahjahan was very pleased by this dauntless courage on the part of the boy, and he awarded him valuable gifts, including the elephant Sidhkar(43).

The Polo(45)

Akbar loved to play Chaugan or polo. For Abul-Fadl it was not a sport for amusement but a game "which strengthens onsets and hand to hand encounter, there is education for the strenuous, and improvement for horses.... His Majesty regards the pastime as worship under the guise

of sport(44)". Akbar made rules and regulations for the game. Before the game, players were chosen. The number of players was ten, with two retiring after twenty minutes and their place was taken by two other players. The game was played in two ways: in one, players tried to take the ball with their sticks from the middle to a pillar at the end of the round known as a Hal (in Hindi it was called a Rol). In the other way, which was known as Bellah, players hit the ball and galloped after it and took it to the Hal. A successful attempt to hit the ball to the Hal was announced by the beating of drums. Betting was permitted(46).

Akbar invented a glowing ball to make it possible to play polo in the darkness of night(47). Golden knobs were attached to the tops of Chaugan sticks(48). Akbar used to lay polo at his new city of Nagarchain (City of Repose)(49).

The Indoor Amusements

Besides the entertainment of listening to singing and music for a few minutes every day in the intervals between the hours of work at the court, and that of enjoying singing and music to their full at festivals and other celebrations and having the entertainment of listening to the poetry of the poet Laureate and other eminent poets in the court, the Mughul Emperors had a few more indoor amusements. One of them was wrestling.

The Wrestling

The Mughul Emperor had many wrestlers in his service, Iranians, Turks and Indians. They used to show their strength and technique in wrestling, especially on the occasions of festivals and celebrations and at the time of the arrival of foreign embassies at the court(50).

The court wrestlers received monthly salaries. On their exceptional performance, the Emperor awarded them the robes of honour, elephants, horses, and other gifts(51).

Babur writes in his Memoirs about some famous wrestling contests which he observed from time to time. A match was held between Sadiq and Kalal, in which Sadiq vanquished Kalal and won the contest. Babur awarded Sadiq a Sarape (head to foot dress), a saddle horse, and 10.000 tankas for his prize. Kalal also received the consolation gift of 3000 tankas from the Emperor(52). Babur witnessed another wrestling contest at Lahore between Dost-i-Yasin Khan and the champion of Lahore. Dost vanquished his opponent after a hard struggle. Babur recognized the merits of both of them and awarded them Sarape (head to foot dresses)(53).

Wrestling was considerad a manly sport, worthy of the nobility and gentlemen. Young men's physical training included lessons and exercises in wrestling under the supervision of master of wrestling (an ustad). The young nobles therefore knew the art of wrestling and sometimes wrestling contests took place between nobles and servants for entertainment. At Karamnas, Muhsin, the cup bearer, challenged Shadman to a wrestling contest and was thrown by him(54). On another occasion a wrestler of Aud defeated Hindustani champion(55).

Once Humayun, for an extra-ordinary entertainment, ordered the nobles of his court to wrestle with one another. The Emperor and the princes also joined this exceptional wrestling contest, and the Emperor himself wrestled with Imam Quli; and Hindal with Mirza Yadgar Nasir (56).

In the court of Akbar there were many wrestlers of repute like Mirz; Khan Gilani, and Muhammad Quli Tabrezi, who was also known as Sher Hamla (Aggressive like a Tiger)(57). In one contest between Haibat the Tahamtan and Jog Sobha, Haibat, contrary to the rules of sportsmanship, tore open the hand of Jog Sobha. Akbar was infuriated and gave him a stunning blow so that "that gigantic form fell senseless like a weakling(58). During the

time of Jahangir, a wrestler, Sher Ali, came from Bijapur to the Emperor's court. He wrestled with all the prominent wrestlers of the court and none of them could compete with him. Jahangir honoured him with the title of "the Wrestler of Dar al-Saltanat(59)". Shahjahan was also very fond of wrestling and witnessed wrestling contests very often(60).

The Witnessing of Tricks of Jugglers and Acrobats

Sometimes the Mughul Emperors liked jugglers and acrobats to show their tricks in the court for entertainment(61).

Jugglers, from various parts of India, came to the Mughul court in the hope of getting awards. At one reception which was given by Babur to certain ambassadors, acrobats showed their amazing tricks. "They arranged seven rings", writes Babur,"one on the forehead, two on the knees, two of the remaining four on fingers, two on toes, and in an instant set them turning rapidly(62)". Once the jugglers from Karnatic (South India) showed wonderful tricks at the court of Jahangir, which he wrote about in his Memoirs. "One of them played one end of an iron chain, 5 1/2 gaz in length and weighing 1 seer and 2 dam, into his throat and slowly swallowed it with the aid of water...after this he brought it out(63)".

The Pigeon Flying

Pigeon flying was a popular past-time in the Orient, especially in Turkistan, where even rulers and princes were fond of it, like Umar Shaikh Mirza of Farghana. His great-grandson, Akbar, emperor of Hindustan, was also fond of pigeon, flying, and called it Ishq-Bazi (Love affairs)(64). He had thousands of pigeons of different kinds, qualities, and colours. They were trained by experts to play different charming tricks. They were divided into different groups and given names like shirazi, shustari, kashsni, jogya and qumri. Wild pigeons were known as gula.

The pigeons' most beautiful and charming feat was the Charakh, i.e. swift hirling round, performed by a particular kind of pigeon called Lotan. They were set flying, and whichever came down later than the others was the winner. The other feat of the pigeons was Bazi(65).

Akbar had nearly twenty thousand pigeons, out of which five hundred were the Khassa(66). The nobles, aware of the Emperor's fondness for pigeons, presented him with birds of quality as gifts. Aziz Khan Kukaltash once gave Akbar a pigeon which became his favourite and was called with affection Mohana (Lovely)(67). Once an Uzbeg ambassador brought for him the best pigeons of his country and a Kabutarbaz (pigeon fencier) named Habib(68). Jahangir, Shahjahan, and Alamgir were also fond of pigeons.

Mina Bazaar

Once of month the Fancy Bazaar was organized for the amusement of the royal ladies. All the women of the harem and the wives of notable nobles attended this bazaar. Akbar called it Khush ruz (Happy Day). It was a point of social contact for women, who through it escaped from the usual routine of life. One can imagine an assembly of women, all in their best dress, displaying their ornaments and jewels, talking, gossiping, and watching out for a suitable match for their sons(69). All varieties and rarities of merchandise were exhibited in the shops. The Emperor came with the royal ladies and enjoyed shopping(70). Besides being an amusement, the fancy Bazaar served a political purpose: the Emperor freely conversed with the ladies and listened to their grievances and problems(71).

The man's bazaar was held after the women's. Merchants from all over the world brought all sorts of commodities for sale(72). It served two purposes: a source of amusement, and a chance to have the novelties of the world in one place for purchase. Jahangir made the

occasion more lively and colourful by ordering that the bazaar should be held at night and that lanterns should be lit before each shop. It presented a beautiful spectacle. "I visited all the shops", writes Jahangir, "and purchased what jewels and ornamented articles and other things appeared good to me(73)".

Other Amusements

The Mughul Emperors in their leisure time used to amuse themselves with playing chess, chaupar or playing cards with ladies of the harem or the nobles of the court.

We find references in 'Baburnama' as well as in the 'Humayunnama' of Gulbadan to the playing cards from Shah Husain Arghun (74). Gulbadan Begam writes about the method of card playing, that there were twelve persons in the game, each got twenty cards, and everyone of them was expected to have twenty Shahrukhis with him. To the winner, the losers had to surrender 20 Shahrukhis each(75).

It was Akbar who introduced different styles of playing cards which,were explained in detail by Abu'l-Fadl. There were twenty styles of playing cards. The first was known as Ashwapati (Lord of Horses). In this game the highest card had a picture of a king on horseback with all the symbols of royalty. The second highest card was of a wazir on horseback, while other cards had only the picture of horses. The second style was known as a Gajpati, in which the king was on an elephant. In the third game the king was depicted with infantry (Narpati). In the fourth, known as Gadhpati, the king's power was represented by the treasury, arms and armours, the fleet, nobles, genii, wild beasts, and snakes. In one game, known as Tipati, the queen was found sitting on the throne surrounded by her maids. Akbar made some alterations to these cards. In one set of cards the king was inspecting merchandise, while other cards had pictures of animals of burden. In one set the king was listening to music, and in another set he was

distributing silver coins. These sets of cards numbered twelve in all, the king and the wazir were the valuable cards, while the other ten had equal value(76).

Jahangir was also fond of card playing as was observed by Thomas Roe at his court(77).

The chaupara was like chausar, and differed merely in the form of the game(78). "It is played", writes Abu'l-Fadl, "with sixteen pieces of the same shape; but every four of them must have the same colour. The pieces all move in the same direction. The players use three dice. Four of the six sides of each dice are greater than the remaining two, the four long sides being marked with one, two, five, and six dots respectively". The plan of the chaupara board was like that of the present day Ludo, in which the two bands of equal size bisected each other at right angles(79).

Another game was Chandal Mandal, which had twelve different styles of play. The number of players in this game was sixteen(80).

Pachisi was another game like chaupara, played on a square board with wooden pieces. In the royal palaces in the forts of Agra and Fathpur, there are large Boards of Pachisi out into the pavement. It is said that Akbar used to play the pachisi game with his queens, using these boards, while the harem maids played the part of the wooden pieces of the game.

References

1. *A'in*, i, p. 204.
2. *Cambridge History of India*, iv, pp. 88-89.
3. Najib Ashraf Nadwi: *Muqaddima Ruqqa'at-i-Alamgiri*. Azamgarh n.d., p. 391. In ancient Persia the king's game was preserved in a park called the paradise. It was surrounded by high walls and nobody was allowed to hunt there. Cf. Huart, C.: *Ancient Persia and Iranian Civilization*. Tr. by R. Dobie. London 1927, p. 146. Mugsin Fani: *The Dabistan*. Paris 1843, i, pp. 183-85.
4. Tuzuk, I, p. 190. *Akhbarnama*, ii, pp. 222-23. See Ogilby, p. 128: "In the surrounding of Agra and Delhi were the places (jungles) where the Games keeper prevented hunting and keep hunt for the king".
5. The man in charge of the royal hunt.
6. The man in charge of royal pigeons, hawks, and falcons.
7. The skirmishers.
8. Qawa'id, p. 74.
9. A'in, i, p. 204.
10. Manrique, p. 295.
11. *Akbarnama*, iii, 600. Tuzuk, i, pp. 129-30. Mu'tamad, pp. 58-59, 265-79.
12. Monserrate, p. 77.
13. Tavernier, p. 312.
14. Ogilby, p. 128.
15. *A'in*, i, p. 127.
16. Tuzuk, i, pp. 167, 191, 369. In his eleventh year of his succession, Jahangir killed 28, 532 animals. Out

of them 17, 167 were killed by him personally. Bernier, p. 379.

17. Foster, W., p. 154.
18. Elliot & Dowson, v, p. 272.
19. Tuzuk, i, p. 45.
20. Ibid., pp. 286-87.
21. Salih,, i, 625.
22. Tuzuk, i, pp. 83, 103, 120, 122, 125, 129, 203-4. Qawa'id, p. 74. *Akbarnama*, iii, p. 241. Mu'tamad, p. 30. Manucci, i, p. 191. Ogilby, p.128. Bernier, pp. 378-79. Foster, W., p.154. Musta'idd, p. 38. On the Qamargah hunt among the Mongols, see Howarth, H.H.: *History of the Mongols*. London 1888.- Repr. New York 1966, i, p. 111: Firat the Khan entered the ring with his wives and some favourites, then the great chieftains were allowed to hunt, and in the end a general permission was given.
23. *Akbarnama*, iii, pp. 241-43.
24. Badauni, ii, p. 92. See Nizam al-Din, the author of *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, Elliot & Dowson, v, p.317: "Accordingly the amirs, under the direction of Mir Muhammad Atka, drove together about fifteen thousand animals, deer, nilgaos, jackals, foxes, etc., into five kos on every side, and the Emperor's tent(kasar) was brought here and set up. The Emperor then mounted, and went out to hunt...When several days had passed in this sport. His Majesty graciously gave his attendents permission to shoot, and afterwards made the permission general, so that there was no soldier or any person who did not get several kinds of game". There is a beautiful painting of this big hunt. It was outlined by Miskin and painted by Sarwan.
25. Tuzuk, i, p. 129.
26. Tavernier, p. 312.

27. Qawa'id, p. 47. Roe, p. 402. Terry, pp. 402-3. Tavernier, p. 312. Ogilby, p. 129. Bernier, pp, 378-79, 731.
28. Manucci, i, pp. 191-92.
29. Ogilby, p. 129. Manucci, i, pp. 191-92. Bernier, pp. 278-79.
30. Ibid., pp. 378-79. Ogilby, p. 129.
31. A'in, i, pp. 208-9.
32. A'in, i, p. 213. Tuzuk, i, p. 164. Qawa'id, p. 74. Roe, p. 383. Hawkins, pp. 103-4. Bernier, p. 377.
33. A'in, i, pp. 211-12. Tuzuk, ii, p. 60. Qawa'id, p. 74. Ogilby, p , 129.
34. Monserrate, p. 61. De-Laet, p. 97. Foster, W., p.247. Hawkins, pp. 106-8. Peter Mundy, p. 127. Bernier, pp. 376-77.
35. See A'in, i, p. 136. Blochmann, 127: "The charkhi is a piece of hollowed bamboo, half a yard and two tassujes long, and has a hole in the middle. It is covered with sinews and filled with gunpowder, and earthen partition dividing the powder into two halves. A fuzee wrapt in paper is put into each end. Fixed into the hole of the bamboo at right angles is a stick which serves as a handle. Upon fire being put to both ends, it turns around and makes a frightful noise. When elephants fight with each other, or are otherwise unruly, a bold man on foot takes the burning bamboo into his hand and holds it before the animals, when they will get quiet...His Majesty invented the present method, which was hailed by all". Peter Mundy, p. 127. Thevenot, p. 45.
36. Maulwi Nur Bakhsh: *A Historic Elephant-Fight*. In: JPHS 2. 1913-14, pp. 53-54.
37. Peter Mundy, p. 128.

38. Must is a state which comes over a young elephant after intervals during which he behaves as if intoxicated and is ferocious and reckless in attack.
39. *A'in* , i, p. 139.
40. Ibid., p. 139.
41. *Cambridge History*, iv, p. 80. There is a beautiful painting of Akbar mounted on Hawa'i pursuing the defeated elephant, and crossing the Jumna wooden bridge. It was outlined by Basawan and painted by Chatar (Victoria and Albert Museum).
42. Manucci, ii, p. 364.
43. Salih, i, pp. 555, 562. Lahauri, i, 489. Maulwi Nur Bakhsh, pp. 50-74.
44. On the fondness of the Sasanian kings for the game of Polo, see Sykes Percy: *A History of Persia*. London 1930, i, p. 416.
45. *Akbarnama*, iii, 173. Beveridge, H., iii, p. 242. *A'in*, i, p. 214.
46. *A'in*, i, pp. 214-15. *Akbarnama*, iii,. pp. 236, 272.
47. *A'in*, i, 215. Bada'uni, ii, p. 84.
48. *A'in*, i, p. 215.
49. Bada'uni, 'ii, 84. Monserrate, p. 30. Roe, p. 78.
50. *A'in*, i, p , 189.
51. *A'in*, i, 189.
52. *Baburnama*, p. 650.
53. Ibid., p , 656.
54. Ibid., p. 660.
55. Ibid., p. 683.
56. Muhammad Hindal son of Babur, younger brother of Humayun. Mirza Yadgar Nasir, brother of Babur.
57. *A'in*, i, p. 189.
58. *Akbarnama*, iii, pp. 328-29.
59. Tuzuk, i, p. 335.
60. Manucci, i, p. 191.
61. Qawa'id, p. 58. Monserrate, p. 202. Ogilby, p. 128.
62. *Baburnama*, p. 633.

63. Tuzuk, i, p. 412.
64. Akbar called pigeon flying Ishq-Bazi because it is very hard to forego this hobby like the separation, on the part of a lover from his beloved (Cf. *A'in*, i, pp. 215-18).
65. It is flying higher and higher in the sky and remained flying longer and longer. It is a domain of a particular kind of pigeon called Gira-Baz (*A'in*, i, p. 216).
66. Property for the use of the emperor.
67. *A'in*, i, pp. 215-16.
68. *Akbarnama*, iii, pp. 486-87.
69. *A'in*, i, p. 200. Ogilby, p. 50.
70. Peter Mundy, p. 238.
71. The women of nobility in ancient Persia met once a year with royal ladies and conveyed their grievances against their husbands or relatives through them to the king. Cf. Muhsin Fani: *The Dabistan*. Paris 1843, i, p. 171.
72. *A'in*, i, p. 200.
73. Elliot & Dowson, vi, p. 361.
74. *Baburnama*, p. 584.
75. Gulbadan Begam, p. 77.
76. *A'in*, i, pp. 221-22.
77. Roe, p. 33. Ogilby, p. 128.
78. In Chausar, the dice is four or six sided, four inches long and half an inch thick on every side, and is thrown by hands, not from boxes.
79. *A'in*, i, pp. 218-19.
80. Ibid., pp. 219-20. Blochmann, pp. 304-5: "consists of sixteen parallelograms arranged in a circular form round a centre. Each parallelogram is divided into twenty one fields, every eight of which forms a row. The number of pieces is sixty-four, and four dice are used".

Chapter 9

The Imperial Treasury

The grandeur of the Great Mughuls was also displayed by their wealth in gold, silver, diamonds, rubies, and other precious stones. It was one of the royal prerogatives to have the best, costliest, and most valuable diamonds, jewels, rubies, and precious stones. Diamonds valued at 12,000 and 20,000 rupees, Ovington writes, were purchased only by the Emperor(1).

The Mughul Emperors used to send their agents and envoys to different parts of India and foreign countries in search of rare and precious stones and jewels. Akbar told Asad Beg on his departure for the Deccan, "You must not relax your efforts as long as there is one fine elephant or rare jewel out of your grasp in the Dekhin"(2). Jahangir sent Muhammad Husain Chelepi to Istanbul for the purchase of jewels(3).

All European Merchants, who were expected to bring diamonds and jewels from Europe, were checked by government officials at the time of their arrival. If they had any valuable jewel, this was reported to the Emperor and sometimes it was sent to him for observation. Tavenier's jewels were checked by Nawab Aqil Khan and "Mirza Muazzam, and finally by Nihal Chand(4).

There was a separate department for royal jewels, diamonds, and precious stones. A writer (Bitikchi) was in charge of the department and was assisted by clerks and darughas. Expert jewellers were appointed for the evaluation of jewels and to find out any flaw at the time of purchase. The royal treasury contained Badakhshani rubies,

large diamonds, round and clear pearls, emeralds, bright topazes, deep coloured sapphires, and red and blue yaquts (hyacinth).

These jewels were divided into different categories according to their value(5). The large number of jewels in the treasury was increased by every succeeding Emperor, who added to the jewels he had inherited(7).

The nobles and princes presented the Emperor with diamonds and new jewels on different occasions. The Emperor also received precious stones as a part of any tribute or ransom. After the battle of Panipat, Babur dispatched Humayun to Agra. He besieged the fort and the garrison was reduced to a miserable plight. At this time the family of the Raja of Gawaliar was within the fort (the Raja having accompanied Sultan Ibrahim Lodhi to the battlefield had been killed). The family of the Raja opened negotiations and offered to Humayun a valuable diamond if they were allowed to depart for Gawaliar unmolested. Humayun accepted the proposal. This diamond was the famous Koh-i-Nur(8). Jahangir carefully writes about the diamonds, rubies, pearls, and other precious stones which were offered to him on different occasions by princes and nobles. Asaf Khan, on his appointment as wazir, presented him with a ruby valued at 40,000 rupees(9). Wazir Khan offered him an Egyptian ruby which was considered a rarity(10). Khankhanan sent him a ruby and two pearls worth 20,000 rupees(11). Shahjahan presented him a ruby which was given to him by Rana of Mewar(12). Mirza Jamal al-Din gave him a cornelion from Yaman which was considered a great beauty(13). On another occasion Mirza Jamal al-Din offered him a yellow ruby which was equal in size to a hen's egg(14). Prince Khurram presented a ruby worth 80,000 rupees(15). On his return from the Deccan the prince brought the offerings of the Deccani rulers, consisting of precious stones, diamonds, and rubies, including a sapphire, weighing 6 tanks and 7 surkhs, worth

100,000 rupees(16). On one Nauruz occasion (1619), Shahjahan's offerings contained a ruby weighing 22 surkhs and worth 40,000 rupees, and a diamond worth 18,000 rupees(17). Khwaja Jahan, the governor of Agra, once sent him diamonds, "one of them as of a violet colour", writes Jahangir, "and cannot be outwardly distinguished from a sapphire. Up to this time I had never seen a diamond of this colour(18)". Shafsta Khan offered Shahjahan a jewel of one lakh rupees in value(19).

Jewels and diamonds were worn by the Emperor. Roe saw Jahangir wearing jewels profusely on his birthday(20). The value of Shahjahan's sarpech was twelve thousand rupees, and all the jewellery born by him was worth two crore rupees. The high priced jewellery and diamonds worn by the Emperor, and several other jewels, were kept under the charge of the royal ladies(21).

In Jahangiri Mahall at Agra there are underground rooms where costly and rare jewels and diamonds used to be kept.

Jewels and diamonds were given as awards to princes and nobles(22), and were used in the construction of certain articles of gold and silver and in the decoration of furniture. Shahjahan sent a jewelled sham'dan(candlestand) as a thanks offering to the tomb of the prophet. It weighed 700 tolas and was worth 10,000 rupees. It was covered with gold and studded with gems, amongst which was the famous diamond which the Emperor received from Golkanda in tribute. The Sham'dan was valued at two lakh and 50,000 rupees, of which one lakh and 50,000 was the value of the diamonds(23).

During the reign of Shahjahan, a large number of jewels, rubies, emeralds, pearls, diamonds, and precious stones, to the value of 200 lakh rupees, were gathered in the Royal Jewellery. Out of them he selected jewels and precious stones weighing 50,000 Mithqals (500 Ib) valued at 86 lakh rupees, for the decoration of the Peacock Throne.

Besides this one lakh tula of pure gold, equal to 250,000 mithqals in weight, valued at 14 lakh rupees was also given. The Throne not only became a piece of art, but displayed the enormous wealth of the Emperor(24).

Tavernier, the famous European jeweller, had a chance to observe the jewellery at the court of Alamgir. It was a rare collection which contained all the valuable and rare jewels and diamonds from the time of Babur to Alamgir.

He gives a vivid description of what he saw:

"Akil Khan, chief of the jewel treasury who when he saw us, commanded four of the imperial eunuchs to bring the jewels, which were carried in two large wooden trays lacquered with gold leaf, and covered with small cloth made expressly for the purpose... After these trays were uncovered and all the pieces had been counted three times over, a list was prepared by three scribes who were present... The first piece which Akil Khan placed in my hands was the great diamond, which is a round rose, very high at one side. At the basal margin it has a small notch and flaw inside. Its water is beautiful, and its weight 319 1/2 ratis, which are equal to 280 of our carats... he showed me another stone, pear shaped, of good form and fine water, and also three other table diamonds, two clear, and the other with some little black spots... Subsequently he showed me jewel set with twelve diamonds each stone of 15 or 16 ratis, and all roses...Also a Jewel set with seventeen diamonds, half of them were table and half rose, the largest of which could not weigh more than 7 or 8 ratis, with the exception of the one in the middle which weighed about 16. All these stones are of first class water, clean and of good form and the most beautiful ever found"(25).

References

1. Ovington, p. 199. Manucci, ii, p. 417.
2. Elliot & Dowson, vi, p. 167.
3. Tuzuk, i, pp. 237-39.
4. Tavernier, pp. 110-11.
5. *A'in*, i, pp. 11-12.
6. Qawa'id, p. 65.
7. Manucci, ii, p. 343.
8. *Baburnama*, p. 477.
9. Tuzuk, i, p. 103.
10. Ibid., p. 147.
11. Ibid., p. 160.
12. Ibid., p. 285.
13. Ibid., p. 298.
14. Ibid., p. 317-18.
15. Ibid., p. 333.
16. Ibid., pp. 399-400.
17. Ibid., ii, p. 78.
18. Ibid., ii, p. 480.
19. Lahauri, ii, p. 480.
20. Roe, p. 252. Cf. Hawkins, p. 433: "He is exceedingly rich in Diamonds, and all precious stones, and visually wearth every day a fine Diamont of great price".
21. Lahauri, i, p. 238.
22. Tuzuk, i, pp. 16, 79, 156.
23. Sharma, S.R.: *Mughul Empire in India*. Bombay 1934. ii, p , 482.
24. Ibid., p. 482.
25. Tavernier, pp. 314-16.

Chapter 10

The Royal Library

The Mughul emperors were not only the richest sovereigns of their age in their wealth of diamonds and gold but also in their collection of books of learning and literature. All of them had fine literary taste and love for learning, which led them to found the finest library in the whole kingdom. It was a big institution, maintained by a large staff. It was attached to the department of calligraphy working in co-operation with the department of miniature painting.

The Organization of the Library

The royal library was under the control of a librarian, who was appointed to the post on account of his learning and scholarship. We find some references in 'Baburnama' to Khwaja Muhammad Ali Kitabdar and Abd Allah Kitabdar, who were evidently attached to the work concerning books and the library(1). Humayun's librarians were Mulla Surkh and Lala Beg, known as Baz Bahadur(2). Akbar's librarians included Mulla Bilel and Inayat Allah(3), Jahangir's Maktub Khan(4), Shahjahan's Rasida and Mir Salih(5), and Alamgir's Sayyid Ali Khan Jawahir Raqam, and Qabil Khan(6).

There was a large staff of book-binders, gilders, and cutters who contributed to the process of beautifying and binding a book.

Books in the library were arranged according to subject and value, books of prose, poetry, Hindi, Persian, Greek Kashmiri, and Arabic were all separately

catalogued(7). The Mughul emperors throughout collected and preserved valuable books. Babur, though he passed most of his time in travelling and fighting, saved the valuable books which he acquired from Samarqand, Herat, and other places, and managed to bring them to India(8). Humayun purchased Tuhfat al-Salatin by Mir Ali at the cost of 2,500 rupees. Books on different subjects by famous scholars were purchased for the emperor by his officials in India, Arabia, and Persia. Higher prices were given for books written in the handwriting of their authors themselves(9). Sometimes authors sent their books to the royal library in the hope of appreciation and award.

Not only the wealth of gold and silver but also the wealth of learning and letters was considered by the Mughul emperors as the trophy of victory. The valuable library of Ghazl Khan, son of Daulat Khan, the governor of the Panjab, whom Babur had just defeated, was protected by the emperor from being looted by soldiery and was taken over by himself(10). Akbar incorporated the rare library of Shaikh Ḟadi, (d.1595) into the royal library after his death. It contained works on medicine, astrology, music, philosophy, religion, mysticism, astronomy, geometry, and theology(11). After the conquest of Gujrat the library of Itimad Khan, a noble at the Gujrat court, was captured and all his books were added to the royal library(12). Alamgir, after the conquest of Bijapur, ordered all the books from the library of Bijapur to be taken away and added to the royal library(13).

Mughul emperors kept a part of the royal library with them whether on travel or expedition. During the siege of Khambayat, Humayun lost the book 'Tarikh-i-Timuriyya' which made him disturbed until it was found. He kept a part of his library with him even when in exile(14).

Books from the royal library were given to scholars and favourite nobles as presents. Akbar used to give books to the religious scholars for the preparation of discussions.

All books were registered and at the time of issue and return were carefully checked(15). Jahangir gave his Memoirs as a gift to some of his nobles, and once awarded some books to the 'ulama' of Gujrat. The emperor also received books as a gift from scholars(16).

The royal library contained a large number of important books and was the best reference library. Once, during a discussion, an objection was raised to Badauni's account of the foundation of Kufa and Naqib Khan immediately brought 'Raudat al-Ahab' by Amir Jamal al-Din and some other books from the library and confirmed the statement of Badauni(17). Once prince Shah Alam presented 'Alamgir with a book written by Mustafa Khan with a compliment that it was the only book on this subject. The emperor asked the librarian to bring books on the subject to show the prince, and it was found that the royal library contained a number of books on the same subject(18).

Humayun, after his restoration, founded the royal library in Shermandal in the Dehli fort, where he spent his spare time in study. Akbar kept the large part of the royal library near Muthamman Burj, and the rest of the books in the harem(19).

Department of Caligraphy

The best calligraphers were engaged in service throughout the Mughul rule. They included masters like Muhammad Husain Kashmiri Zarrin-Qalam under Akbar, Sayyid Ali Khan Jawahar Raqam under Jahangir, and 'Abd al-Baqi Yaqut Raqam under Alamgir(20).

After books had been copied by calligraphers, they were checked by another person known as a Muqabal Nawis (the person who compared it) and, after his approval, the title of the book was registered in the Accession Register of the library(21). The margin (hashiya)

of the book was always decorated by flowers, birds, or geometrical tracery (naqsh-wa-nigar). Some of the books were illustrated by the painters of the court. Akbar, who was very fond of the story of Amir Hamza(22), invited the fifty painters from the school of Behzad to illustrate the twelve volumes of the story.

The result of their collective efforts came out in 1,700 miniatures, which are regarded as the masterpiece of Mughul painting. There were nearly 145 miniatures painters at the court of Akbar, who were trained by master painters Mir-Sayyid Ali and Abd al-Samad Shirazi(23). The books which were illustrated under Akbar included Abu'l-Fadl's history of Akbar's reign, A'in-i-Akbari, and 'Akbarnama' Rashid al-Din's history of universe 'Jami al-Tawarikh', Sharaf al-Din's history of Amir Timur 'Zafarnama' Firdausi's, epic 'Shahnama', Nizami's poetical masterpiece 'Khamsa' Jami's celebrated 'Baharistan', and the epics and romances such as 'Ramayana', 'Nal Daman', and the story of Amir Hamza. 'Baburnama' was illustrated by forty painters at the court of Akbar, and included the works of the famous painters like Kesu, Paras, Dhanj Raj, Sarun, Tirya, Bhagwan, Mansur Ibrahim, Abd Allah, Farrukh Beg, Jamshid, and Ibrahim Qahhar(24). In addition to the works of the court painters, the royal library contained the works of famous painters such as Behzad, Sultan Muhammad, Agha Mirak, and Muzaffar Ali, who worked outside Hindustan(25).

The Department of Translation

The department of translation was set up by Akbar with a number of famous scholars who translated books from other languages into Persian and contributed to the development of new ideas. Especially the religious,

philosophical, historical, and cultural books of India were translated from Sanskrit into Persian in an attempt to give an approach to Hindu learning, religion and philosophy. Abd al-Qadir Bada'uni translated Singhasan Battisi Ramayana and Atharva Veda. Faiqi composed in Persian poetry the love story of Nal Daman Mahabharta was translated by Naqib Khan Bada'uini Mulla Sheri, and Hajji Sultan. From the Turkish language was translated Tuzuk-i-Baburi by Abd al-Rahim Khankhanan(26). Some books were also translated from Latin(27). In particular, Akbar regarded Bada'uni's translation. Other scholars at the court who did translation work were Naqib Khan, Mulla Sheri, Maulana Ibrahim Sarhindi, Shah Mufammad, Mulla Ahmad Thatwi, and Abul-Fadl.

All translated books were included in the royal library and were read by the emperor or recited to him. When the emperor found a translation praiseworthy, the translator was generously rewarded in addition to his usual emolument.

The Court Historians

The Mughul emperors had a keen interest in history. Babur and Jahangir wrote their Memoirs giving an account of the events of their reign. The Mughul emperors also appointed court historians to write the history of their reigns.

Humayun's court historian was Khwandamir (d. 1535). who had written 'Qanun-i-Humayun'. Akbar appointed Abu'l-Fadl (d. 1602) as his court historian. He covered every aspect of his reign in the voluminous 'Akbarnama' and its gigantic appendix 'A'ini-Akbari'. On Akbar's request his old aunt Gulbadan Begam, sister of his father Humayun, Jauhar Aftabchi. (d. 1589) personal

attendant of Humayun, and Bayazid, the Darugha-i-Buyutat (in charge of stores in the provinces) under Humayun, wrote their memoirs of the life and reign of emperor Humayun. Moreover, Akbar planned a history of the first thousand years of the Hijra Era. Different sections of the history were alloted to different scholars: Naqib Khan, Mulla Ahmad Thatwi, Shan Fath Allah, Hakim Hummam Hakim Ali, Hajji Ibrahim Sarhindi, Mirza Nizam al-Din Ahmad, and Abd al-Qadir Bada'uni were employed on this project. The introduction was written by Abu'l-Fadl, and the book was entitled 'Tarikh-i-Alfi' (The History of Thousand Years). It was never completed and few portions were actually written down(28).

Jahangir in his later period, appointed Mu'tamad Khan (d. 1639-40) to continue his Memoirs. Shahjahan first deputed Muhammad bin Amin Qazwini and then Abd. al-Hamid Lahauri (d. 1654-55) as his Court historians, the works of both of them were known as 'Badshahnsma'. The history of the ten years of Alamgir's reign entitled 'Alamgirnama' was written by the court historian Muhammad Kazim (d.1681).

Beside the historians, there were a number of poets, physicians, scholars and ulama in the court, who contributed to the learning and literature of the age and enriched the royal library.

The Emperor's Favourite Books

Akbar was very fond of hearing books read, and professional recitors brought books from the library and read them for the emperor. He used to give awards to the recitors and personally put the mark where the recitor finished the recitation. He heard nearly all the important books on different subjects, however, his favourite books

were: Nasir al-Din Tusi's Akhlaq-i-Nasiri, Ghazali's Kimiya-i-Sa'adat, Kai Ka'us's Qabusnama, Sa'di's Gulistan and Bustan, Sana'i's Hadiqat al-Haqiqiya, Awhadi's Jam-i-Jam, Firdausi's Shahnama, Rumi's Mathnawi, the works of Khusru and Jami, the Diwans of Khaqani, Anwari, and the story of Amir Hamza(29). Shahjahan was interested to hear religious, historical, and biographical books. The recitors with beautiful voices read his favourite books before he went to bed. Alamgir had a good collection on exegesis (Tafsir), traditions (Hadith) and Jurisprudence (Fiqh)(30). He was interested in reading the works of Ghazali and the letters of Shaikh Sharaf al-Din Yahya Munairi(31).

References

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2. Gulbadan Begam, p. 55.
3. Bada'uni, iii, PP. 283-4.
4. Tuzuk, i, p. 12.
5. Lahauri, ii, pp. 505, 679.
6. Kazim, p. 363.
7. A'in, i , p. 115.
8. Brown, P.: *Indian Painting under the Mughuls*. Oxford 1924, p. 66.
9. Qawa'id, p. 52.
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16. Bayazid Bayat, p. 75. Azad, Muhammad, p. 38.
17. Bada'uni, ii, p. 319.
18. Khwafi Khan, ii, p. 442.
19. *A'in*, i, p. 115.
20. Ibid., p , 115. Faruki, z., p. 525.
21. Chopra, P.N., p. 169.
22. The story of Amir Hamza was originated in Persia and got its way to the Mughul court where it

became very popular. The authorship of the story is dubious. For futher details, see the article Hamza b. Abd al-Muttalib in EI 2.

23. Soleiman, H.: *Miniatures of Baburnama.* Tashkent 1970. pp. 32, 73.
24. *A'in*, i, p. 118. Soleiman, H., pp. 33-34.
25. Brown, P., p. 67.
26. *A'in*, i, pp. 115-16. Bada'uni, ii, pp. 183-84 212-13, 320, 366, 397. *Akbarnama*, iii, p. 661.
27. Azad, Muhammad, p. 68.
28. *A'in*, i, p, 116. Badauni, ii, pp , 301, 318-19. Akbar believed that after one thousand years (1000 A.H.) the age of Islam was to be over. Therefore he ordered that the history of a thousand years should be written. (Cf. Bada'uni, i, pp. 301, 306.)
29. *A'in*, i. pp , 115-16.
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Chapter 11

The Mughul Encampment

The Mughul emperors preferred to live in camps rather than in palaces. Whenever they travelled for hunting, on an expedition, or a pleasure trip to Kashmir or Kabul, the whole equipment of the encampent was carried along with them to provide them with every type of facility and comfort. They elaborated the system of encampment because the whole court travelled with them. The royal camp presented a picture of a moving city, which was administered by an efficient staff. Captain Hawkins was surprised to see the large area of the royal encampment and writes," ths compass of his Tents may bee as much as the compass of London and more ... ".(1)

Royal tents in the encampment were organized on the model of the royal palace, and contained everything which was needed by the emperor. His daily routine remained the same and no change whatsoever, took place as a result of travel. He appeared, as usual, for Jharoka darshan, and held his court regularly.

When the royal party started to travel the procession marched in order. At the short distance in front of him were drummers and trumpters mounted on elephants and playing music, then came cavalry followed by elephants. Royal ladies travelled in howdas placed on elephants, while lady - servants rode on camels(2).

They were followed by elephants carrying royal insignia and different flags, and then came nine well-equipped horses. The emperor was surrounded by his

servants who kept the people away and sprinkled water before him to put down the dust.

An officer, well acquainted with the area, accompanied the royal entourage, and provided geographical and other information to the emperor on his inquries. A forward party covered with white cloth dead animals which were in the way of the royal party(3).

The whole equipment of the encampment was transported by different means. Ordinary baggage was moved by carts, while other furniture was carried by kahars (porters), who were hired for this purpose. Elephants, camels, and mules were employed to carry heavy equipment. Boats were taken along with the camp to cross any river. On such occasions several bridges were constructed so that the whole camp might easily cross over. Sometimes the number was so great that two or three days were taken up in crossing.

Everything which was needed by the emperor accompanied him in his travel: gold, silver, rupees, arms, cloths, flowers, fresh water, and officials records and royal karkhana especially, tushak khanah, abdar khanah, and khushbu khanah, travelled along with him. The royal kitchen with all its requirements was loaded on camels, and cows were taken for milk. Small tents, carried by mules, were used in an emergency, enabling the emperor to eat or take rest on his journey at any time(4).

A large number of staff accompanied the royal encampment. The incharge of the camp was mir manzil (also khush manzl) whose duty was to select a site for the camp, the rest of the work was performed by the staff of farrahsh khanah, which contained a thousand farrash, bayldars, water-carriers, carpenters, torch-bearers, tent-makers, and sweepers. Pioneers went, at least a day before, and selected a suitable place for the camp. The site, after selection, was levelled and different platforms were raised.

The administration was conducted by mir manzil, darughah and mushrif (5).

At the time of travel, the length of the route was measured with a ten foot rod by surveyors. This was completed as soon as the emperor left the camp, and Ovington observes that, "a just account both of the distance and number of miles is brought to the Emperor before the journey was begaun"(6).

Tents were the essential part of the camp, and to accommodate the whole court large tents were made, which were beautifully decorated from inside and protected from sun-shine and rain. Babur, although spent most of his time in travelling and in the camp, had neither time nor money to make his tents luxurious. Once in a state of poverty and homelessness he had only two tents, one of them was used by his mother, and he himself used alachuq (a tent of flexible poles)."(7).

Humayun had time and an inventive mind to make new and spacious tents. One of his tents had twelve divisions corresponding to the sign of the Zodiac. Every sign had a lattice through which the light of the stars could be seen. Another of his tents was known as Mihr Amir(8).

Akbar made the system of camping very elaborate. His royal camp was surrounded by gulalbar or red wall, which was eight feet high and had two gates in front and another on the side of the harem. It was erected round the royal tents so as to separate them from the others. A ditch was dug outside the screen and there the royal insignia were displayed. On the eastern side was erected bargah, the largest tent which was erected by one thousand men with the help of machines. It was so big that ten thousand men could be easily accommodated.

In the middle was erected chubin rowti on ten pillars. Near it was a two storey wooden palace, one was used for the worship and the other for Jharoka darshan in the morning. Then was erected zamin duz, a large tent,

which could be divided into two parts, Besides this there were nine shamyanahs known as mundal which were erected on four pillars, and five other shamyanahs known as mundal, were used sometimes for khilwat khanah, Another large tent known as ath-khamba (eight pillared) contained seventeen shamyanahs and was erected on eight pillars. Khargah was a folding tent and contained one or two doors.

The haramsara was placed outside the bargah, twenty chaubin rowtis of ten gaz in breadth with walls of canvass screen were erected. It was used by royal ladies. Beside it were the pavilions for servants and close to it was the saripardah, made of carpets, with a number of tents for urdubegi or armed women who guarded the harem. Outside dawlat khanah-i-khas was a courtyard known as mahtabi. In the middle was raised a platform covered by an awning. Here the emperor held his court at night. Close to gulalbar was khilwat khanah and then on a suitable place was toilet(9).

The interior of the tents was decorated with beautiful carpets, curtains, and furniture.

Shahjahan made a great tent dal-badal which was erected by five hundered men. The cost of this tent was rupees 50, 000.

All small tents and shamyanahs were made of gold and silver tissues and brocade. They were erected on silver pillars and silken ropes were used to tie them up. Qanats were made of velvet and embroidered with brocade and chintz of Masulipatam. Canopies were made of silk. Royal khargah and rowtis were made of Kashiin velvet and European satin. The Royal camp contained all the apartments for the use of the emperor: khwabgiih (sleeping room), diwan-i-am-wa-khas (ball for public and private audience), ghusal khdnah (private audience chamber), harem, naqqar khanah (music gallery), chawky khanah (guard room), tents for the arms, cloths, fruits, sweat,

water, kitchen, stables for horses, cattle, elephants, leopards and dogs. On each side of the gate two saddled horses remained ready in case of emergency.

The enclosure of the royal camp, during the time of Akbar, was 1530 yards long. On the left aide within the distance of 100 yards were erected the tents of royal ladies of such status as Maryam Makani, and Gulbadan Begum. On the right aide was the tent of prince Salim, to the left was that of prince Murad and behind were erected tents for karkhanhjats. If princes were absent or not accompanying the emperor, the tents of favourite nobles were allowed to be erected to the right and left in the second line.
Every officer and man had his fixed place in the royal camp. The arrangements were carefully planned and the same pattern was maintained at every stage. The camps of princes and nobles were erected on reserved places according to their status, and a flag was hoisted on each tent to signify the person who occupied it. It was divided in such a way that for a newly arrived man there was no confusion(10).

The tents of the emperor, princes, and royal ladies were defended on every side by palisades, ditches, and armed guards(11). Tents of the nobility faced the diwan-i-am, and had to be lower than the emperor's(12).

Royal tents in which the emperor held his court were supported by ornamented pillars with golden knobs. Nobody else was allowed to have such knobs, except princes with royal permission. Likewise colour of the emperor's tent was red, and nobody else was allowed to have this colour. Princes and nobles were allowed to choose other colours, white, green, and red and white strips. The spectacle of the different coloured tents presented a most delightful view, "one of the greatest raretyes", says Roe, "and magnificencyes I euer saw (13)".

There were always two sets of tents: while one was in use the other was sent ahead to be pitched on a suitable

site. When the emperor wanted to go to the next stage, he first went hunting or moved slowly and the whole camp followed him until the camp on the next stage was ready. As soon as he arrived in the camp it was announced by beating of drums and playing of music. Royal ladies moved last but reached the next stage before the emperor and welcomed him(14).

In front of royal tents, on a high pole, was lighted a lamp known as akasdiya (the sky lamp). It indicated the royal residence and was a guide to those who lost their tents or those of relatives or friends, such people passed the night under the lamp. In confusion or emergency all people rushed towards the akdsdiya, as it was the heart and central point of the camp(19).

There were a number of markets in the royal camp, rather a separate market for every section. There were nearly 250 bazars providing all types of commodities to the emperor and nobles. Despite their great requirement, the supply of provisions was never acute. The things which could not be found in great cities were available in the bazar of the royal camp. Merchants from all parts of India and foreign countries accompanied the camp. There were linen-drapers, grocers, druggists, corn-dealers, oil men, cooks, jelly-makers, butchers, game-catchers, flower-sellers, perfume-sellers, silk-men, linen painters, dyers, arm-sellers, carpenters, book-sellers, scribes, and paper-makers. At the end of the day all the merchants came together in the middle of the camp and opened their shops. During the night all the shops were properly lit. There were darughahs who controlled the prices of all commodities. Grains and food provisions were very cheap. The daily supply of provision was well kept and brought from all parts of the kingdom.

There were markets for slaves, horses and other animals as well. For the entertainment of the people in the camp there were story-tellers, musicians, dancers, and

jugglers, who amused the people by their art and skill. During the night the camp was watched and guarded(20).

Manrique observed the imperial camp at Lahore which greatly impressed him:

And more than half of a league of the adjoining country was covered by a handsome wall laid out, moving town, campared of a variety of tents and pavilions of many colours ... a great number of occupied tents, or I should rather say cook-shops: in some only the roast flesh of various domestic and wild animals was sold ... Nor did these bazaars lack the simple food of the natives and supertitious pagans ... of these and other kinds of food there was such abundance in this moveable suburb that the curious Reader can imagine what would be met with in the bazaar and markets within the city ... It was seen not only in the abundance of the provisions but in the order and cleanliness of the streets and markets ... and also in the great justice and rectitude they observe, whereby all lived safely with their property...."(21).

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Chapter 12

The Palace of the Great Mughul

The splendour of the palace of the Mughul Emperor was truly in keeping with his great empire, magnificent court, and unbounded wealth. It reflected his individual personality.

The palace of Akbar was massive and strong; Jahangir's beautiful and charming; Shahjahan's delicate and colorful, and ' Alamgir's as magnificent as his father's while he was in the north.

The palace of the Mughul Emperor used to be not only the residence of the Emperor and his family, but it housed the whole secretariat of the central government and the large number of his retinue.

The Mughul Emperors built their palaces at Agra, Fathpur, Delhi, and Allahabad. They were built on an elevated place near rivers with red stones and marbles. All of them were built within a strong fort. Every palace had a Daulat Khana and Shabistan-I-Iqbal; the residential quarter of the emperor and his family- the harems, Diwan-I- Amm and Diwan-I-Khass, and at a distance round these apartments were karkhanajat (royal factories and royal stores), and stables for the Emperor's elephants and horses 1).

The Harem (2)

The section of the palace of a Muslim ruler which has most excited the imagination of western novelists, poets, composers, painters, and even serious historians has been the harem. They have imagined it to be a place full

hundreds of wives of a single man and they have painted it to be a den of sexual orgies. But it is far from the truth. Actually the hundreds of women who lived in the harem were not only the ruler's wives and concubines. The inmate of the harem included, in addition to the Emperor's wives, his mother, his step-mother, sisters, step-sisters, daughters, daughters-in-law, grand-daughters, aunts sometimes grandmother, and step grand mothers, grand aunts, and all other near and distant female relatives. Moreover, there lived in the harem in addition to the Emperor himself many royal princes and many other make relatives of the Emperor.

The management of the harem was supervised by a special staff. For the expenses of the harem an annual list of expenditure was prepared by a writer checked by a minister of the state, and finally stamped by the royal seal. Another writer kept a complete record of all the expenses which occurred in the harem (3).

The management of the harem was divided into many sections each under a separate superintendent (Darughs). A writer kept a record of everything that happened in the harem (4). Salaries of the harem officials were high, besides costly gifts which they received from time to time (5). To serve the royal ladies there were a number of a woman, who carried out the business outside and inside the palace (6). There were a number of eunuchs, (Khwajasara) who looked after the certain business of the harems.

The doors of the harem were closed early in the evening, and torches were left lit throughout the night. The harem was guarded by women harem guards and Rajput soldiers day and night (7).

If a lady belonging to the household of some noble wished to visit the harem, she had first to seek permission in writing from the harem officials. In certain cases the Emperor would allow a lady to stay within the harem for

more than a month (8). If there were women who were not known and yet wanted to visit the harem, they were searched thoroughly without any regard for their status (9). Royal ladies were allowed by the Emperor to visit the ladies of the household of the nobles. They usually went out at about 9 o'clock in the morning in the company of female servants and eunuchs; In the case of close relatives such visits were frequent.

For the expenses of all the royal ladies, annual allowances were granted according to their rank and position. On the occasion of festivals and celebrations they received costly gifts from the Emperor (10). Jahangir, after his succession, increased the allowances of royal ladies from 20% to 100% (11). After the conquest, a share of war booty was given to the royal ladies. Babur, after his victory in Panipat, sent gifts to every Begam (12).

Life in the harem appeared sensual to some western writers, and it appeared to others miserable and lonely; but it was neither un-naturally sensual, nor miserably forlorn. The pleasant surroundings of the palace provided entertainments for the royal ladies. Through every part of the palace there passed marbled channels about a foot deep in which clean water used to flow. Before every apartment there were green plots with fountains playing therein and a space around them. The royal ladies used to sit and enjoy the display of water. There were pavilions and Burj in every palace, where royal ladies sat in cool and fresh air. At Fathpursikri, in the Jodhabai palace, there is a Hawa Mahall (Air palace), open from all sides, a favourite resort for the royal ladies (13).

For the amusement of royal ladies there were places within the palace where they could play games. At Fathpur and Agra there are boards of Pachisi; there the Emperor enjoyed the game with the royal ladies, putting harem maids as pieces of the game. In the palace of Fathpur there is a place knows as Ankh Micholi (Blindman's Buff),

where young princesses used to play hide and seek. There was Machi Tal (fish pond) in palaces in which colored fish with golden rings in their noses were a great source of amusement for the royal ladies.

The Mina Bazaar or Khushruz used to be held every month and on the festival of Nauruz. It provided an occasion for the royal ladies and the ladies of the household of nobles to get together (14).

The royal ladies accompanied the Emperor on expeditions, hunting, on excursions or pleasure trips (15). The Emperor also used to go to gardens in the company of royal ladies (16). Whenever they went out in a procession, people left the road and stood aside respectfully. A water carrier sprinkled water before the royal conveyance to put down the dust. A servant went ahead and cleared the way. If any noble happened to be there, he retired from the road and stood aside (17).

When their conveyance reached the destination, the male servants retired at the first gate and the royal ladies were transferred to carriages driven by women. They conducted them to the women's apartments. The royal conveyance was protected and guarded by Rajput soldiers (18).

The royal ladies shared all the vicissitudes of the life of the Emperor. Humayun lost his wife Hajji Begam in the battle of Chausa (1539), but she was treated with honor by Sher Shah and came back safely. Nurjahan accompanied Jahangir on all occasions and displayed great courage and wisdom when he was captured by Mahabat Khan (19).

Dancing and music were the favorite amusements of royal ladies. A number of singing and dancing women were employed by every queen and princess. On festivals and celebrations all these singing and dancing girls displayed their talents in the harem (20). Besides this the royal ladies also amused themselves with indoor games such as cards, chess, pachisi, and hide-seek -games (21).

The most exalted lady in the harem used to be the Queens mother. Their Emperor son paid them the highest respect (22). Mothers played an important role in shaping the character of young princes. The case of Babur is evidence of how he was influenced by his grand mother, Isan Daulat, and mother Qutluq- Nigar Khanim. They played a significant role in safeguarding the interest of Babur (23). Humayun's mother, Mahim Begam, took an active part in organizing celebrations and festivals. She added beauty to these occasions by introducing the system of illumination. She used to give grand feasts and always invented a new way of decoration (24).

Hamida Banu Begam, the mother of Akbar, although remaining aloof from politics, took an active part in the conspiracy against Bairam Khan. She had great affection for her grandson, prince Salim, and when he rebelled against his father she tried to patch up their differences and received him on his arrival at Agra, after his rebellion (25). Jahangir had a great respect for his mother, Maryam Zamani. His weighing ceremony and the wedding ceremonies of princes took place at her residence (26). Shahjahan's and Alamgir's mothers died before their succession.

Other ladies of the royal family were highly respected by the Mughul Emperors. In Kabul, Babur visited his female relatives every Friday to cheer them up (27). When his relatives arrived in India from Kabul he gave then houses to live in and jagirs (fiefs) for their expenses (28). He warmly received his aunts, Fakhr-I- Jahan and Khadija Sultan, when they arrived in Agra from Kabul (29). At the time of his death, he said to Humayun," I commit you and your brothers and all my kinsfolk and your people and my people to God's keeping, and entrust them all to you" (30).

Princesses played a prominent role in the palace during the time of Shah Jahan and Alamgir. After Mumtaz

Mahall, Jahanara became a prominent lady in the harem. Shah Jahan conferred on her all the privileges which had been given to Mumtaz Mahall.

She became the chief lady of the harem, in charge of its management and of family celebrations, as well as being custodian of the royal seal. She loved all her brothers and presented their cases, problems, and demands to the Emperor. Alamgir also made Jahanara the chief lady of the harem sometime after his succession. Some of the Mughul Princesses possessed a high literary taste such as Gulbadan Begam, the authoress of the famous Humayunnama, and Salima Sultan Begam, Queen of Akbar, who was an educated lady of literary taste. Some of her verses have survived (31). Nurjahan had a taste for art and literature. She used to compose beautiful couplets (32). Jananara Begam was a scholar and wrote Munis al- Arwahi; Zaib-al-Nisa, daughter of Alamgir, was also a lady of high education and literary achievement. She was well-versed in the nastaliq, naskh, and shikista style of calligraphy. She was the patron of poets and scholars and she possessed a grand library. There was a school for the princesses in the palace, with a well-educated lady appointed to teach them. Prominent scholars were also appointed as tutors of princesses. Jahanara was taught by Hurijan, the sister of Talib Amuli, and Zaib al-Nisa by Hafiza Maryam and Mulla said Ashraf, the famous scholar of his time (33).

The widow queens were much respected by the reigning monarch. They were given generous allowance and had a significant position in the harem. They passed most of their time in the memory of their husbands and looking after their tombs. Mahim Begam, the favourite wife of Babur, supervised his tomb in Agra and twice a day sent food to the attendants. She granted special allowances to them from own income (34). Bibi -Mubaraka, the Afghan wife of Babur, transferred his Begam, the wife of Humayun, built the tomb of her husband and supervised it

till her death. Nurjahan was respected by Shahjahan in spite of all she had done to harm him and obstruct his succession to the throne. He granted her an allowance of two lakh rupees per year. All demands and requests of widows were accepted by the Emperor and rarely rejected.

The ladies of the harem, in the later years of their life, spent their time in some pious work, like the construction of a mosque, inn (saray), hospital, or school. They used to arrange the marriage of orphans and poor girls, and were generous in almsgiving and charity (36).

The Birth

The birth of a prince was an occasion for celebration in the harem. There are two painting depicting the birth of a prince: one is by Baswan, and shows the mother and child surrounded by female attendants, while women in the harem are celebrating the birth of the prince by music and dancing, astrologers are preparing horoscopes, and people are rejoining by playing music in a corner. In another painting by Dharman Das, the playing of music and distributing of alms is beautifully depicted.

The news of the birth of a son was announced by trumpets and beating drums. The person who conveyed the happy news to the Emperor received a handsome award.

The occasion was celebrated by distributing alms and charity, releasing prisoners, awarding nobles, and holding great feasts which lasted for seven days (37).

After the birth, astrologers were asked to make horoscopes of the new born. Humayun, who was interested in astrology, himself made the horoscope of Akbar. Sometimes more than one horoscope was prepared by different astrologers in different styles, Indian as well as Greek (38). Predictions about his greatness were made by astrologers (39). Poets composed qasida and chronograms in which the good luck and bright future of the prince were predicted. On Humayun's birth, which were composed

were: Shah Firuz Qadr, (the victorius King), and Khush Bad (the good sign)(40). Khwajah Hussain composed a qasida on the birth of Prince Salim, and was awarded two lakh tankers (41). The chronogram on his birth was Durr-I-Shahwar-I- Lujha-I-Akbar (a royal pearl of the ocean) (42).

The child was named the same day on which he or she was born. An allowance was also granted for his or her maintenance (43). Sometimes names were given after some person or place, or else indicating some qualities of the child (44).

When a grandson or grand-daughter was born, the Emperor proposed the name and gave all expenses for the celebration (45).

The occasion of circumcision of the royal baby was celebrated in a befitting manner. On the ceremony of Akbar's circumcision, nobles were ordered to dress in green. In the hall where the prince was to be circumcised, a throne had been placed on which the Emperor installed himself and all the courtiers stood there in order (46).

The new born prince was handed over to the wife of some favorite noble who had at the time a baby to suckle. She suckled the royal prince and her own son together. It was the usual Mughul custom. The suckling lady was called Anga, her husband Atga of the prince and her sons Kuka or Kukaltash of the prince. The members of the family Atga Khan were known as Atga khel. The Emperor had great affection for his foster brothers (47).

The Marriage

Princes were usually married at the age of sixteen years(48). At the time of a marriage, the palace and the whole city were decorated; roads were covered with costly cloths and illuminated, trees were beautified by artificial flowers, and armed soldiers, wearing colorful uniforms stood on both sides of the road where the marriage procession passed.

The bridegroom was usually mounted on an elephant, while nobles in palkis (palanquins) or on horses followed him. Music and dancing were the order of the day (49). Celebrations of the marriage lasted for a month, during which time grand royal palace. To make the occasion a felicitous one, alms and charity were distributed generously, prisoners were released, and food was served to the poor.

Turkish ceremonies were usually observed at a marriage, but as Akbar and his successors married Rajput princesses, most of the Hindu customs were also adopted (50).

Three of these Turkish and Indian ceremonies were very significant: sachaq, mahndi, and the barat (51).

Before the marriage costly gifts were exchanged between the two families for the bride also received a dowry from her parents, as well from her in- laws. In addition the bride received, according to the Muslim law, Mahr (52), from the bridegroom. Sultanam Begam on her marriage to Hindal, received in dowry from her parents a palace (Kushak) in addition to jewellery, silken cloths and other articles (53). When Prince Salim was married to the daughter of Raja Bhagwandas, the mahr was fixed at two lakh of tankers. In dowry the Raja gave horses, elephants, slave boys and girls from Ethiopia, India, and Circassia, golden vessels adorned with jewels, and golden and silver utensila. At the same time the Raja gave a saddle horse to every noble who accompanied the bridegroom (54). A special feature of this first marriage of a Mughul prince to the daughter of a Rajput ruler was that on the departure of the bride for her new house, the Doli (a covered palanquin) was carried a short distance by the Emperor and the bridegroom themselves, a unique honour for the Rajaput princess, Rajput rulers and Rajputs in general (55).

The marriage of Prince Dara Shikuh to the daughter of prince Parwez is memorable in the history of the Mughul

dynasty. After the appointment of the marriage day, Buyutats (56) of the royal Karkhanajat (workshops) of Lahore, Akbarabad and other places were ordered to make ornaments, jewellery, furniture and dresses. Experts from Gujrat, Benaras, Satgaon, and Surat were ordered to prepare brocade, jewellery, and other articles which were required for the marriage. Jahanara Begam supervised all the arrangements. The dowry given by the bride's family was witnessed by the Emperor (57).

After the marriage of a prince, he was allowed a separate establishment with monthly allowance for himself and his wife. Sometimes he was given a palace, the household servants, and cash for initial expenses.

Mughul princes were married into the royal family itself and to the daughters of great nobles, members of the Safawi family of Iran, who had come to the Mughul court, and the daughters of Rajput rulers. Marriages with Rajput princesses and with the daughters of the Safawi house had political significance.

The marriage of princesses was equally celebrated on a royal scale. For the bridegroom of a royal princess, it was a great honour to be married into royal house, and he showed his extreme gratitude for his honour at the time of the marriage. When Babur's daughters, Gul rang and Gulchahra, were married to Timur and Takhta Bagha Sultan, both the bridegrooms kneeled down before the Emperor in gratitude at being given the position of son-in-law (58).

Princesses were mostly married with a member of the royal family. Gulbadan, daughter of Babur, was married to her cousin Khidr Khwaja; Gulrang and Gulchahra, the daughters of Babur, were married to their cousins; Sultan Ruqqya, the daughter of Hindal, was married to Akbar; Khanim Sultan, the daughter of Akbar, was married to Muzaffar Husain, the grandson of Kamran; Gulrukh, the grand-daughter of Kamran, was married to Jahangir; Bahar

Banu, the daughter of Jahangir, was married to Tahmurath, the son of Danyal; the daughter of prince Murad was married to Prince Parwaz, and the daughter of Prince Parwaz to Dara Shikuh; Mahr-al-Nisa and Zubdat al-Nisa, daughters of Alamgir, were married to Iizad Bakhsh, the son of Murad, and Sipahr Shikuh, the son of Dara Shikuh respectively (59).

Grooming of the Princes

The great Mughul of India, from Babur to Alamgir, all six of them in unbroken succession without a weakling in between, stand unique in the history of aristocracy. But it did not happen just by chance. It was due to their careful education and training in the art of war and administration.

The Education

The little princes started their education at the age of four years, four months, and four days, when was performed the ceremony of Bismillah (60).Teachers were appointed on the basis of their learning and scholarship. There was no fixed number of teachers and different Emperors had a different number. Babur had four: Shaikh-Madhid Beg, Baba Ali Quli, Khuda-I-Birdi, and Khwaja Maulana Qadi Abd Allah. Humayun first of all was taught by his father, Babur, then he received his education under Shaikh Zain al- Din, Shaikh ' Abd al- Qasim Astarabadi, Mulla Nur al-Din, and Maulana Iiyas, Akbar's teachers were Asim al- Din, Maulana Bayazid, Maulana Abd al-Qadir, and Mir Abd al-Latif (62) Jahangir was educated by Mir Kalan, Shaikh Ahmad, and Abd al-Rahim Khankhanan (63). Shahjahan's teachers were Qasim Beg .Tabrizi, Shaikh Abu'l Khair, Hakim Ali Jilanni, and Shaikh Sufi (64). Alamgir's teachers were Mir Hashim Gilani, Maulana Abd al-latif Sultanpuri, Mulla Muhan, Sa'dallah Khan, Sayyid Muhammad Qannuji, Mulla Shaikj Ahmad (Mulla Jivan,) Danishmand Khan and Shaikh Abd al-Qawi (65).

The Mughul Emperors took a personal interest in the education of their children. Babur wrote Matnawi-I-Mubin in Fiqh (Islamic Jurisprudence) for the education of his son Kamran (66).Akbar himself could not get full profit from his teachers, but he was keen on the education of his children and entrusted them to prominent scholars and learned men.

He had a liberal attitude towards education and provided opportunities for the princes to learn, besides conventional learning, Hindu philosophy and European languages. Prince Murad learning Portuguese from Christian father Monserrate, who was a member of the Jesuit mission to the court of Abkar (67). Prince Khusru was started in studying Indian philosophy under Sur Das Brahman (68).Teachers were respected by princes whom they punished in the case of negligence or some serious offence (69).

The Emperor kept an eye on the conduct of princes and on their progress in learning. If they were found negligent, in their studies, they were reprimanded by the Emperor. Once Akbar got leave from his teacher, but when Humayun learned of it he became angry and told him not to do it again (70). Alamgir was very strict in the matter of the education of his children. Once Prince Kam Bathsh did not go to school room in the palace, where his teacher remained waiting for him. On hearing this he told the prince "A man without knowledge is like a beast. A prince, in particular, should have a refined mind"(71).

The syllabus consisted of religious education and Persian literature. Popular books in Persian literature were Sa'di's, Gulistan and Bustan, Firdusi's Shahnama, Nizami's and Khusru's poetry, Shanaf al-Din's Zafarnama (72).The princes were taught the history of their family (73). Besides Persian, the Turkish language was also taught to Mughul princes (74). Humayun had sufficient knowledge of Turkish to converse sometimes with his

Turkish nobles in their language. Akbar could also speak Turkish (75), and Jahangir was proud that he could speak and write it. (76).Akbar specially appointed Tartar Khan to teach the Turkish language to prince Khurram. But he did not take much interest in its study and Jahangir complained to Ruqqya Begum against Khurram in this respect (77). Alamgir reprimanded Muhammad Sultan for neglecting the study of the language of his ancestors (78).

There was a school room at the palace for the teaching of princes (79). Probably the sons of nobles also jointed the school, because we find references to the fact that on the death of a favourite noble, proper care was taken for his children and they were brought up with the princes in the palace.

Training in the use of arms such as archery, swordsmanship, shooting, riding, and wrestling, was given to princes from boyhood. Akbar, particularly, gave attention to the military training of the princes. For prince Khurram he appointed Mir Murad Deccani, Qasim Khan, and Raja Salbhan (80).

Princes were also trained in all kinds of etiquette: how to dress, how to behave on different occasions and how to appear in public (81). The Emperor always kept an eye on their conduct and activities and gave them counsel from time to time.

The Ataliq (81)

After the early education an Ataliq (teacher) was appointed for a prince. The Ataliq used to be responsible for the education of a young prince in the art of peace and war. It was post of great responsibility. The influence of the Ataliq was sure to have a contribution in shaping the mind and attitude of a prince. Only nobles, the most capable, the most trusted and most likeable in the eyes of the Emperor were appointed as the Ataliq.

The appointment of a noble to the post of an Ataliq was considered a great honour for him. The man, who was appointed to this post, used to present to the Emperor in gratitude according to Mughul tradition, costly gifts and elephants. He then took the prince upon his shoulders when gold and silver coins were scattered. Mir Khurd, on his appointment as the Ataliq of Hindal, kneeled down before the Emperor and presented to him 100 Shahrukhis. Qutb-al-Din Atka, who was appointed the Ataliq of prince Salim, gave a great feast on his new honour (82)

The Ataliq was required to train the prince in administration, legal matters, the art of war, and etiquette. He kept an eye on the conduct of the prince. Bairam Khan was the Ataliq of young Akbar and his trained him in the art of government. Prince salim's first Ataliq was Qutb-al-Din Khan, later on Ataliq was the famous scholar and general, Abd-al-Rahim Khankhanan (83). Sharif Khan, Ismail Khan, and Sadiq Khan were appointed Ataliq of prince Murad, one after the other (84). Prince Danyal's Ataliq was Sa'id Khan, Mun'im Khan was appointed the Ataliq of the boy, Mirza Hakim.

From the age of sixteen or seventeen onward a prince had his own army, nobility, and court. He received from the Emperor fief (jagir), promotion in his mansab (rank) and high sounding titles.

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24. Gulbadan Begam,pp. 28-29.
25. *Akbarnama*, iii, pp.643,815.
26. Tuzuk, i, pp. 78,230.
27. Gulbadan Begam, pp. 14.
28. Ibid, p.14.
29. *Baburnama*, p.588.
30. Ibid, p.709.
31. Ma'athir al- Umara, i, p.376.
32. Ibid, i, pp.124,134; Khwafi Khan, i p.270.
33. Ma'athir al- Umara, ii, p.829; Mu'tammad, pp.31-32, Musta'idd,p.539. Khwafi Khan, i, pp.280-81. Monserrate, p.203. Manucci, ii, p. 331. Yazdani, G.: Jahanara. In: JPHS 2. 1913-14, pp.152-53. Ahmad Hafiz Shamsuddin: Zibunnisa Begam and Diwan-i - Mukhfi. In JBORS 13. 1927, pp.42-53.
34. *Baburnama*, p.709.
35. Ibid,p. 710.
36. Lahauri, i, pp.151-52.
37. *Akbarnama*, i, pp.17,21. Nahawindi, Mulla Abd al-Baqi: *Ma'athir-i- Rahimi.* Calcutta 1910, i p.767. Elliot & Dowson, v, pp.334-35. Manucci, ii, p.343.
38. *Akbarnama*, ii,p. 505.
39. Ibid, p. 76.
40. Ghani, M.A: *A History of Persian Language and Literature at the Mughal Court*. Allahabad 1924, ii,p.5
41. Nahawindi, Mulla Abd al- Baqi, ip.768. The tanka was a silver currency which was issued by Sultan Iltutmish (1210-1236).

42. *Akbarnama*, ii, p.977.
43. Manucci, ii, p.343.
44. *Baburnama*, pp.364, 385, Gulbadan Begam, p. 10. Tuzuk, i, pp.2,34.
45. Lahauri, ii, pp. 388-89. Manucci, ii, p.343.
46. Gulbadan Begam, p. 77. Elliot & Dowson, v, p. 223.
47. The members of Atgha Khel were appointed to important posts of trust, awarded titles, and much respected by the emperor. Aziz Khan Kuka, the foster brother of Akbar, sometimes behaved rudely and disobeyed the royal orders. Akbar did not take any action against him and used to say that between him and Aziz there flows the stream of milk which he could not cross (Blochmann, pp.321-25). Jahangir had deep affection for his Angah, mother of his Kuka Qutb al- Din Khan. On her death he said that she was for him more than his mother (Tuzuk,I,pp. 84-85). When Qutb al- Din, his foster brother, was killed by Sher Afgan, he said that he was to him in the place of a son, a brother, and a friend (Tuzuk I, pp.115). Alamgir's foster mother was Khwafi Khan's wife. Her son Mir Malik Hussin had the title of Khan Jahan Bahadur Koalas (Najib Ashraf, p.122.).
48. Manucci, ii,p.342.
49. Khwafi Khan, ii, p.129.
50. Bada'uni,ii, p.341: lighting of the fire and scattering of coins all the way from the house of bride to the royal palace were the Hindu ceremonies which were adopted by the Mughuls.
51. Sachaq; the sending of costly gifts and other articles by the parents of the bridegroom to the house of the bride for her. The things were taken in gold and silver trays on the heads of slaves in gorgeous

costumes in a procession with the band playing in front.
Mahndi: The ladies of the household of the bridegroom went to the house of the bride and applied hennas to her hands.
Barat: Going of the bridegroom with his parents, relatives and friends in a procession to the house of the bride for nikah and bringing his bride to his own house. This procession used to be the most splendid ceremony.

52. A gift settled upon the wife.
53. Gulbadan Begam, pp.30-33.
54. Bada'uni, ii, p.341; Elliot & Dowson, v, p.447.
55. Ma'athir al-Umara, ii, p.130.
56. The Superintendent of the royal workshops and stores.
57. Salih,i pp.511-12,523,535. Peter Mundy, p.202.
58. Gulbadan Begam, p.23.
59. Ibid, p.23. *Akbarnama* ,iii, p.632; Tuzuk, i, p.81.
60. *Akbarnama*, i, p.271. Bada'uni, iii, p.98. Salih, i, p.31. When the child begins to study, a ceremony is held on the occasion to celebrate it. One of the elders of the family or some religious man instructs the child to recite some verses from the Qur'an. Afterwards sweets are distributed among the audience. The ceremony is known as Bismillah (Cf. Bada'uni, ii, p.173).
61. Ghani, A.M: *A History of Persian Language and Literature at the Mughal Court*. Allahabad 1929, I, p.48.
62. Bada'uni, ii, p.323.
63. Ibid, p.170; Elliot &Dowson, v, p.370.
64. Salih,I, pp. 31-32. Saksena, B.P: *History of Shah Jahan of Dihli*. Allahabad 1932, pp.2-3.
65. Najib Ashraf Nadwi: *Muqaddima Ruqqa'at-I-Alamgiri*. Azamgarh n.d., pp.125-27. Faruki, Z.:

Aurangzib and his Time. Bombay 1935, p.543. Ma'athir al-Umara, I, pp.227-29, ii, 30-32.

66. *Baburnama*, p.437.
67. Du Jarrice, P.D: *Akbar and the Jesuits*. Ed, by C.H. Pyne. London 1926, p.24.Monserrate, p.52.
68. *Akbarnama*, iii, p.647.
69. Monserrate, p. 53.
70. Bayid Bayat: *Memoirs of Baizid (Bayazid)*. In: Allahabad University Studies. Vol, vi, part I. 1936, p. 137.
71. Sarkar, J: *Studies in Mughal India*. Calcutta 1933, p.119.
72. Ghani, A.M, i, p.48
73. Monserrate, p. 63.
74. Salih,i, p.32; Musta'idd, p.1095.
75. Asad, Muhammad: *Darbar-i-Akbari*. Lahore 1939, p.576.
76. Tuzuk, i, pp.109-10.
77. Salih, i , p. 32.
78. Monserrate, p.207.
79. Salih, i, p.32; Monserrate, p. 203.
80. Sarkar,J., p.42. Chahar Chaman, p.266.
81. Compare the Mughul office of the Ataliq to the Ata Beg (commander- father) of the Salijuqs (*Cambridge* 111-12), the lala of the Safawis (*Cambridge History of Islam*. Cambridge 1970,i, pp. 408,424), and the ottomans (Alderson, A.D: *The Structure of the Ottomans Dynasty*. Oxford 1956, p.117).
82. *Baburnama*, p.403.
83. Bada'uni, ii, p. 270; Eliot & Dowson,v,p.423.
84. *Akbarnama*, iii, p.394.

Chapter 13

Mughul Nobility

Nobility was an important pillar of the institution of kingship, therefore, the ruler tried to create such a class of nobility to serve him and his dynasty with loyalty. Sometimes, the ruler preferred hereditary nobility who served the ruling dynasty generation after generation with loyalty. Some rulers relied on the nobility which was based on slaves. In this case, the slave nobles cut off from all family relations depended on the patronage of the ruler and served him faithfully. Some rulers employed foreigners as their trusted servants and appointed them to high posts with pompous titles in order to counter the local influential elements and their conspiracies. However, in these cases, the ruler took care to select those who had talent, intelligence, and ability to perform efficiently. The close relationship between nobility and royalty was an important factor for stability of royal dynasty.

Mughul emperors constructed their nobility from those people who arrived from Central Asia and Iran. When these people arrived in India, they abandoned not only their homeland but also family and relatives and sought the patronage of the emperor. Once they were appointed to high posts and acquired privileges and comforts, they attached themselves to the Mughul dynasty and served it with sincerity. They fully realized that their survival and their status were due to the stability of the Mughul dynasty. In case of its weakness, they would lose their privileges and high position. This concept brought them closer to the royal family and its interests.

Mughul emperors always welcomed the foreigners who constantly arrived in the hope of getting wealth and high status at the court. As the Mughul state expanded its boundaries, it needed experienced generals and administrators and therefore heavily relied on the foreign elements which provided its energy and support and transformed it as the powerful power subordinated nearly all major rulers of the subcontinent.

Those foreigners, who arrived in India, did not find any difficulty in adjusting to a new country because there were already a number of nobles who belonged to their homeland and they helped them to be introduced to the emperor. These foreigners came to India for certain reasons. Some of them were disappointed in their home country not finding any future prospect and decided to come to India in the hope getting opportunity for bright future. Indeed, the majority of immigrants were not disappointed, especially those who had any military or administrative experience; they soon promoted and amalgamated into higher ranks. Among the new arrivals were those who had either rebelled against their ruler or conspired against him or were afraid some action against them because of their religious affiliation or ethnic origin.

For example, Ali Mardan Khan, who was the governor of Qandhar, betrayed the Safavid ruler and handed over the fort to the Mughuls and took refuge in India. Two governors of Basra, which was under the Ottoman Caliph, arrived in India for protection. Some rulers, who lost their power as a result of civil war or rebellion, came to India and sought the patronage of the emperor.

Akbar decided not wholly to rely on the foreign origin nobility and therefore, inducted the Rajputs in his circle. These Rajput nobles strengthened the Mughuls because they had high respect in India and were famous for their valour and integrity. Akbar also included kayaths and

khatri in his service. They were appointed to high administrative posts as revenue officers and accountants. Today Mal during Akbar and Raja Raghunath during Auranzib's reign were highly respected officers. In the 17th century, when the states of the Deccan were conquered, the Mughuls also included the nobles of these states into their nobility.

After the defeat of Humayun by the Afghans, Akbar did not trust them and kept them from his court. However, when Jahangir became the emperor, he turned his attention to the Afghans because some influential Rajputs opposed his succession. Khan Jahan Lodi and Dilawar Khan were two of his prominent Afghan nobles.

As Persian was the court language, Irani nobles were rapidly promoted to higher ranks. These posts were allotted to those who had experience in the art of warfare or administration, were poets, artists, architects, physicians, musicians, historians, calligraphers or religious scholars who held minor ranks at the court. Mughul emperors heavily relied on the new arrivals from Central Asia and Iran. They not only extended the boundaries of the empire but strengthened it internally by their administrative creativity. However, the process ceased after the death of Aurangzib when the empire began to decline and failed to patronize the newcomers generously. Political instability, civil wars for successions, and weakness of the institution of kingship also changed the structure of nobility. It no longer remained united but was divided on the basis of ethnicity and sect. Instead of serving the emperor, they were interested in protecting their personal belongings and this division subsequently contributed to the Mughul decline.

Categories of Mansabdars

The status of mansabdars (rank holders) was expressed by two terms: zat and sawar zat indicated his

salary which he spent on his personal maintenance while sawar showed his status to the rank he belonged to. It was his responsibility to provide certain number of soldiers to the emperor whenever required for this, he got separate allowance from the state.

There were three categories of the mansabdars. In first category, he had equal number of zat and sawar. In the second category, number of sawar was half of his zat soldiers. The third category was determined if the number of sawars was less than half of his zat.

During the time of Akbar those who held soldiers numbering from 20 to 400 were known as mansabdars. Those who had 500 solders were called umara, while those who kept 3,000 soldiers entitled as umara-azam (grand nobles).The nobles who remained present at the court were referred to a umara hadir. Those who were posted in provinces were known as umara-e-ghair hazir(1). Only royal princes had privilege to have the rank of 5,000. Akbar's mansabdari system was continued by his successors with some changes.

Mansabdars were paid either in cash or allotted jagir as salary. However, they were not posted in one place permanently and were transferred from one place to another. As the Mughul empire expanded as a result of conquests, new jagirs were created in the occupied land which were awarded to new nobles. If no landed property was available, jafur was taken from khalsa land which was the emperor's property. As a result of this policy, khalsa property was reduced during the reign of Jahangir. During the time of Shahjahan and Aurangzeb, powerful and influential nobles started to make their jagirs hereditary. In the later Mughul period, the hereditary nobles became independent and subsequently it reduced the income of royal treasury(2).

It is difficult to estimate the number of the Mughul nobles. However, on the basis of some European travelers'

account they were between twenty-five to thirty thousand(3).

New Arrivals and the Mughul Court

When somebody arrived from Central Asia or Iran, first he got in contact with some nobles to settle down .He tried to find some opportunity to be introduced to the emperor in order to impress him by his intelligence and experience and family connections to get some rank in the royal service.

In case of a famous person who was of high rank in his home country, somebody who belonged to a noble family, or someone who was reputed to be a religious scholar or poet as soon as he arrived the emperor was informed about him. He was presented in the court to have audience with the emperor. The emperor also invited some persons who had experience in some field of administration such as Mir Jumla who was invited by the royal farman to come to the Mughul court. Sometimes a well known person wished to come to the court. On receiving his request, the emperor sent him a royal letter inviting him to join his service(4). Sometimes on hearing reputation of a person the emperor asked some noble to make arrangement for a meeting. Such was the case of poet Faizi who met with Akbar at his request. Dil Shah of Bijapur invited Mir Fathullah Shirazi to his court and when Akbar came to know about him, he sent a farman to Adil Shah in 1583 and ordered him to send the Mir to the Mughul court(5). Mughul emperors generally encouraged the nobles from the Deccan states to come to their court. It was not tolerated by them to see any famous person or artist to serve other rulers of India. Tansen, the singer who was in the service of Raja Ramchandra, was ordered by Akbar to his court. When Shahjahan came to know about scholarship of Danishmand Khan, who came to India as trader, he ordered the administrator of Surat port to send him to the court. He was

welcomed by the emperor and appreciated for his learning. He was so impressed by the generosity of the emperor that he decided to stay in India(6). Similarly, on hearing of the reputation of Sadullah's intelligence, Shahjahan called him and offered him employment(7).

It was also customary that on the arrival of some individual, if he belonged to a noble family, someone who was favorite to the emperor, introduced him with his recommendation. Ghiath Beg was introduced to Akbar by Malik Saud, who was a merchant(8). Those new arrivals were favoured by the emperor and were awarded mansab, jagir and cash. When Khalilullah Khan, who was famous in Iraq and Khurasan, came to the court, Jahangir appointed him as mansabdar of one thousand zat and 200 sawar and granted him jagir. Initially he was granted Rs.2,000 for his expenses(9). During the reign of Aurangzib, when Hussain Pasha, the governor of Basra, arrived in India, and on appearance at the court paid Taslim and Kornish, the emperor was pleased and put his hand on his back as a sign of making him governor. He was awarded the title of Islam Khan and granted the palace of Rustam Dakani for his residence. His sons were also appointed to high ranks(10).

The emperor also tested the professional skill of the new comers. When Hakim Gilani arrived at the court, Akbar presented to him the urine of healthy and sick persons for identification. The Hakim correctly pointed out and thus successfully passed the test(11). Poets, scholars, musicians, artists, and calligraphers on their arrival brought specimen of their professional skill. Ab'ul Fadl, on his first meeting with Akbar presented him his tafsir or Exegesis Ayat-ul-Kursi verse of the Holy Quran(12).

Household Nobility

Those nobles who served the Mughul dynasty were known as khanazad household nobles. The Mughul

emperor had high regard for these nobles. Mughul princes were married into household nobility.

Those nobles whose two generations had served the Mughul dynasty were married to the girls of their families. Among foster families, Aziz Khan Kuka and his family have important places. Two of his daughters were married to prince Murad and to prince Khusru. Akbar was fond of Mirza Aziz Kuka and used to say that "between me and Mirza flows the river of milk." The other family which achieved high place was Mirza Ghiyath who gained significance during the period of Jahangir. Members of his family were appointed to high ranks. The Kachwah family of Rajputs was honored by the Mughul emperors. The children of Shaikh Salim Chishti also got distinguished places at the court.

Sons of influential nobles used to accompany the Mughul princes in their daily routine and acquired close friendship with them. Jahangir in his Tuzuk expresses his relationship to his childhood friends, especially, Muhammad Sharif Amir al-Umara, was his favorites. After the death of loyal nobles, the emperor looked after their children. When Bairam Khan died, his son Abd al Rahim Khankhanan was looked after by Akbar. It was also customary to appoint sons of loyal nobles after the death of their guardians. Those whose duty was to serve the emperor were called as Khawas and only khanazad nobles were appointed to sensitive posts. Their in charge was known as sàrdar khasa(13).

The emperor favored these nobles and pardoned their mistakes and crimes. These nobles gained materially with the growth of the Mughul empire. As a result of it, some of the families fully controlled the affairs of the Mughul state such as the family of Nurjahan, Rahim Khankhanan, and forster families who were on the high ranks and granted fertile landed properties. They were so influential that nobody dared to complain against them on

their behavior or corruption. The result of this policy was that inefficient and corrupt members of these families monopolized high ranks and posts which later caused the decline of the Mughul dynasty.

Nobility and Common people

In the early period, Mughul emperors supervised the conduct of nobility towards common people; if their behavior was not friendly, they were reprimanded and warned to have better relations with them. By the time Jahangir succeeded to the throne, nobility misused its authority, especially, if khanazad umara were involved in corruption or exploiting people, no action was taken against them. Consequently, their relationship with people deteriorated. One European traveler observed that the governors of the provinces used to plunder and pillage people to such an extent that it left them impoverished. According to him the common people had no access to the king. The result was that in the city of Agra people were starving and a sense of helplessness prevailed among poor people(14). Mirza Rustam Safavi, who was governor of Thatta, treated people harshly. When it was complained to Jahangir, he simply dismissed him from the post for a while and then appointed him the governor of Behar. As they were not punished for the crimes they committed, they did not change their habits and continued to treat the subjects harshly. Even their family members were involved in misdeeds and no action was taken against them because of their influential status. For example, people of Gujarat were fed up with the corruption of the brothers of Murtaza Khan, the governor, although he was ordered to come to the court and appear before the emperor but no action was taken against him and his brothers(15). During the reign of Jahangir, the son of Mirza Qalich Beg governor of Lahore, was known to be cruel and a debauch. Just for his amusement he flogged his servants. Sometimes he buried

them alive asking them to bring news of Munkar Nakir, the two Angles who visit a grave after death of a person. On the wedding night of a Hindu girl, he brought her to his palace and raped her(16). Muqarrab Khan, the governor Khambayat, kidnapped the daughter of a widow and kept her in his palace. When the widow complained to Jahangir, the emperor demanded to produce the girl who was by that time dead. The widow was compensated financially but the only punishment to Muqarrab Khan was that his rank was reduced(17). People of far off provinces had no access to the emperor and therefore had to endure all types of cruelty and brutality of the government officials. If the emperor came to know about it, he either dismissed the perpetrators for a time being or transferred them to other places. People hesitated to complain against the official because of their power of revenge. For example, Baqar Khan, the governor of Orissa was notorious for his misbehavior towards people of his area. When it was complained to Shahjahan, Baqar Khan in order to silence the voice of those who approached the emperor invited them and killed 700 persons. When an eyewitness escaped from the mayhem and reached the court, he was also killed by the son in law of Baqar Khan and the whole incident was forgotten(18).

One of the nobles of Shahjahan, Azam Khan, once invited some courtesans for dance. They refused to come pretending they were not well. He became angry and forced them to come to his palace. On their arrival, when they confessed that the reason of their refusal was that they knew that they would not be paid for their performance. On this he ordered them to be killed and justified it that people required harsh treatment for disobeying orders(19). When he was appointed governor of Gujarat, people submitted an application to Shahjahan that he should not be sent to their province as he was known for cruelty and harshness(20). During the time of Aurangzeb, Nijabat Khan, the third son of Mirza Shahrukh, the ruler of Badakhshan, had Ab'ul

Fadl Ma'muri killed; he was punished temporarily by reducing his rank and withdrawal his title. But soon, all his privileges were restored(21).

Generally, nobles adopted the policy of oppression in their areas. They tried to get maximum revenue from peasants and forced them to work for them without any payment. Artisans were also not spared by this treatment. They had to pay taxes beyond their capacity. However, in spite of their brutality and exploitation, nobles were not punished. Hussain Khan takriya, a noble of Akbar, had reputation to treat his subject with cruelty(22). Raza Bahadur, who was awarded the title of khidmat parast, massacred the Mewatis. Some persons who survived, were castrated so as not to procreate anymore. Women and children were made captives and left without food to starve. Having committed such acts of violence, he was not reprimanded or punished(23).

Khan Duran Nusrat Jang as a governor of Deccan, rendered harm and suffering to the people by getting money by imposing illegal taxes and fines. His actions remained unchallenged and the voice of the oppressed was not heard at the imperial court. To please the emperor, he sent one crore rupees to the emperor from his plundered wealth. The day people received the news of his death at Burhanpur, they were so happy that they distributed sweets; that day sugar was not available in shops(24).

Nobles were independent in all their actions and punished their subordinates according to their own judgment. Abd al Allah Khan, governor of Gujarat during the period of Jahangir, beheaded one of his advisors only because he, in a state of intoxication, made some jokes(25). These events show that the Mughul nobles and high officials regarded themselves above the law. They were punished only when they either conspired or rebelled against the emperor. Otherwise they were spared from any punishment. It was their policy to extort money from their

subjects, to kidnap women and rape them and to kill anybody who did not obey them. All such heinous crimes were known but ignored by the royal court. Yusuf Mirak in his book Mazhar-I Shahjahani gives graphic details of the crimes of the Mughul officials in Sindh. He points out how Amir Ahmad Beg, the grandson of Mirza Ghayath Beg A'timad al Daula and governor of Sehwan during the reign of Shahjahan, during his tenure, his brother Mirza Yusuf committed crimes against the people. As he belonged to an influential family, nobody dared to say a word against him. Some of his crimes which he committed were these: he called wealthy people and ordered them beaten on false charges and then confiscated their wealth and property. He imposed a tax on all those who possessed land. Those who traveled from one village to another were forced to pay a tax. He forced traders to sell him goods cheap rates. He imposed high taxes on peasants which reduced them to abject poverty. If peasants could not pay revenue, he took away their cattle and other animals(26).

It shows how the common people endured hardships as there was no alternative for them. The result of this helplessness was that people believed in their fate and accepted it without any challenge without having the courage to raise their voice against the system.

Nobles and the Emperor

Both nobility and the emperor had common interests. That is why they had close relationship with each other to protect their privileges and power. However, loyalty of nobility went through ups and downs from time to time. They remained faithful to the emperor as long he had power; if his power declined, they changed sides easily and won over those who wielded power. The nobles who remained loyal to Akbar, lost confidence in him when Jahangir revolted against his father and some of them openly supported him. Mirza Hadi writes in the Preface of

Tuzuk-i Jahagiri that on the rebellion of Jahangir, the nobles who served under Akbar for the whole of their lives, were worried about their future and turned towards Jahangir(27).

A group of nobles took active part in the succession of Jahangir. Since then, the nobility, on every new succession, supported their candidates in order to preserve and enhance their privileges. The result was that if a candidate of a party of noble succeeded to the throne, the members of the party were appointed on high posts and awarded rich landed properties. Those nobles whose candidate failed to succeed lost their status and privileges. This conflict divided nobles into two groups which weakened their position and subsequently caused damage to the Mughul empire. Aurangzeb in one of his letters describes the state of affairs of the nobles: "I have promoted the nobles to high ranks under such a situation when there was chaos and anarchy everywhere. If I did not favor them, these greedy slaves of money would not have supported me and I could not succeed without their help"(28).

On the social level, relationship between the emperor and nobles used to be pleasant. Nobles, to win favors of the emperor, presented him costly gifts, nazars and pishkash. Nobles from time to time presented to him pearls, diamonds, jewelry, golden vessels and rarities. In return, the emperor increased their rank, awarded titles, and robes of honor(29).

Every governor brought specialties of his province for the emperor. For example A'tiqad Khan, the brother of Asaf Khan, as governor of Kashmir sent Shahjahan carpets and shawls(30). It was customary that whenever nobles were promoted or awarded higher titles, in gratitude they offered nazar to the emperor. Mir Ab'ul baqa whose title was Mir, presented one lakh rupees nazar to Shahjaan when

he became a Khan(31). The offering played an important role in the promotion of nobles(32).

It became the custom that nobles at the appointment of governor of Bengal offered costly pishkah to the emperor. For example, Fida'i Khan offered 5 lakh to Jahangir and 5 lakh to Nurjahan, Sha'aistl Khan, on his appointment, offered Aurangzeb 30 lakh cash and 4 lakh jewellery and other costly gifts(33). As a result, these governors collected money by illegal means. When Fida'l Khan came back from Bengal, he was accused of massive corruption but the emperor ignored it.

The same happened in case of Sh'aista Khan, who left rich heritage after his death. Some of his property was confiscated by the state and deposited in the treasury.To gain favours of the emperor, nobles invited him for a feast. If he accepted it, it was regarded an honour for the noble. When Zain Khan Kuka invited Akbar for a feast, he covered the whole floor with costly shawls. He filled three tanks with perfumed water and put one thousand courtesans inside these tanks. Rose water was sprinkled to make atmosphere pleasant. He presented basketfulls of diamonds along with elephants to the emperor(34). Aziz Khan Kuka on inviting Akbar, offered Iraqi and Arabi horses equipped with golden and silver apparatus, costly vessels, throne, and cloths. Separately, he offered costly gifts to princes and wives of the emperor(35). In 1619, A'ttimad al Daoula when he invited Jahangir for a feast, lighted the whole area around his palace and offered him a throne which was made after a labour of three years. On it Jahangir commented that since the time of Akbar, no noble offered the emperor such a pishkash(36).

Asaf Khan once invited Jahangir, who was very impressed by the arrangements and writes in Tuzuk that from the royal palace to the house of Asaf Khan, it was covered by velvet whose estimated cost was ten thousand rupees. The pishkash which was offered to him cost one

lakh fourteen thousand rupees(37). The emperor interfered in social affairs of nobles. In case of marriage among families of nobles, consent of the emperor was required. Sometimes he reconciled hostile nobles by marrying their children with each other. No noble was allowed to get married without permission of the emperor. When Mahabat Khan married his son without his consent, Jahangir punished the bridegroom on violation of this rule(38).

Princes married in the families of high nobles. The emperor respected them and also advised princes to do the same. If a noble rebelled against the emperor and later sought pardon, the emperor generally forgave him. Khan Zaman who revolted against Akbar many timef was pardoned. In other cases, rebel noble's request for forgiveness through some of his noble friend was guaranteed for his loyalty in future. Ba'iram Khan asked his friend Mun'im Khan to get amnesty from Akbar for his rebellion against him(39).

When nobles were sent for a military adventure, they were given right to cease war and make peace treaty. Only once it happened that Akbar refused to recognize the peace treaty which was concluded by Raja Bhagwan Das with Yusuf, the ruler of Kashmir. The Raja was so much depressed by this violation that he tried to commit suicide(40).Those nobles who were at the capital were duty bound to appear at the court every morning at 9 or 11 o'clock and paid taslimat in the evening. If they remained absent without information, they had to pay fine(41). As there were conspiracies among the groups of nobility, each noble tried to attend the court regularly and keep watch on ongoing intrigues. Those nobles who were posted in the provinces, kept their representatives and spies at the court in order to remain well informed about happenings at the centre and if there was any conspiracy against them to check it immediately by taking pre-emptive action. Spies of Ad al Rahim Khankhanan daily sent him the news from the

capital. Moreover, he kept informers in the government offices and markets to keep him well informed about politics and rumors which circulated among common people. After reading these reports he burnt them(42).

The emperor awarded nobles according to their ranks banners, kettledrums, palanquins, elephants and insignia Jahangir awarded A'itimad al Doula banner and kettledrum and allowed him to use them after prince Khurram(43). It was customary during the Mughul rule that when the emperor went out, nobles accompanied him in the procession. Bernier writes that nobles followed the emperor without any discipline and in the hot weather they wandered here and there(44). Nobles, were not allowed to go anywhere without the permission of the emperor. If they wanted to go for pilgrimage, they sought royal permission. If a noble was transferred, he appeared at the court and asked the emperor for permission. If he was transferred on some charges, he was not permitted to come to the court(45). If the emperor favored any noble, he paid visit to his house. In case of his sickness allowed royal physician to treat him; if he died the emperor expressed condolence to his family. If nobles committed any mistakes, the emperor expressed his anger. For example, such nobles were forbidden to come to the court and pay taslim and kornish. Either they were posted to far off provinces as Bengal or Sindh or to be house arrested and nobody was allowed to meet them. If their crimes were serious, their rank was reduced, title was withdrawn and their jagir confiscated. Sometime they were sent to pilgrimage as a punishment. As there were no prisons, nobles were watched over or were imprisoned in the fort of Gwaliyar.

Retirement

There was no concept of retirement for nobles. If a noble wanted to retire, he submitted an application to the emperor that he should be allotted some land for his

expenses. For example, Khan Dauran, governor of Thatta, requested the emperor for retirement because of his old age and loss of eyesight. The emperor granted him property in Khoshab(46). Agha-i-Aghayan, who served Jahangir for 33 years requested for retirement and exemption from court attendance. He wanted to spend rest of his life in Delhi(47). Sometimes the emperor himself allowed an old noble to retire from the service and granted stipend for expenses. The amount of stipend was a from Rupees 20 to 40 thousand annually. From time to time, there was increase in the allowances.

Confiscation of Property

It was customary during the Mughul rule that after the death of a noble his property, on nonpayment of his loan, was confiscated. It appears that nobles did not pay the state revenue and did not keep full record of their income and payment due to the treasury. They spent government revenue on their personal use. On his death the account officers checked how much state amount he owed. In order to get payment of loan his property including diamonds, jewelry, and elephants were confiscated. Property was not inherited by the family according to Islamic law but according to the wish of the emperor. On confiscation of property, family members of the diseased faced problems by losing their source of income. Bernier points out that in some cases after the death of a noble his sons and grandsons were reduced to poverty and sought employment in the service of some other noble(48).

Generally, the emperor treated the family of a diseased noble generously and divided his property among his sons. Sometimes, the elder son was awarded the title of his father(49). After the death of Bahadur Khan Ruhela, his eldest son Dilawar Khan was granted rank of one thousand zat and 500 sawar. The other six sons were appointed to appropriate posts. Except the elephants the rest of the

property was restored to them(50). After the death of Khan Duran, his property was distributed among his sons(51). On the death of A'timad al Doula, all his property was given to Nurjana(52).

Asaf Khan, before his death gave his palace at Lahore which was built at the cost 24 lakh, his buildings and gardens in Kashmir, Agra, Delhi and gold, silver, diamonds, and jewelry worth 2 crore 50 thousand. After his death, the emperor gave his 3 sons and 5 daughters 20 thousand and rest was confiscated by the state(53).

Families of some nobles resisted this move of the state. When Miraz Rustam Safavi died and the officials of Agra tried to confiscate his property, his widow resisted in a novel way. She dressed slave girls as soldiers and gave them guns to fight in case officials tried to come to the house for confiscation. Her argument was that her family should not be treated like other nobles. The emperor, except elephants, allowed the family to keep all property(54). Islam Khan, one of the nobles of Shahjahan, at the time of his death, burnt all documents, distributed his property among his sons and brothers, and submitted account of 25 lakh to the emperor(55).

Property and wealth of the Hindu nobles was not confiscated as they had inherited them. Those whose property was not hereditary were also treated like other nobles. Hawkins wrote that when the son of Raja Jagannath died the emperor confiscated his wealth which included diamonds and 60 mangpld (2400kg)(56). Generally, nobles distributed their property among their children or spent it in order to live a life of luxury.

Nobility and their Life style

During Akbar's time when the Mughul empire expanded. It increased the resources and wealth, as a result of it nobility also became rich and prosperous. Richness subsequently led to a luxurious lifestyle. They started to

build palatial houses, gardens and other buildings for their comfort. Dress became costly and fashionable. Taste for food resulted in invention of new dishes. Number of servants increased. Elephants, horses and palanquins were used for conveyance. There was competition to have more diamonds, jewelry, gold and silver. Feasts became elaborate and costly. It was the matter of pride to serve hundred of new dishes to impress the rival nobles. They also expanded the harem and kept slave girls for debauchery. Mughul nobility constructed such a culture which based on wealth and rich resources. That was the culture which dazzled historians who portray it as the magnificent culture of the age.

Mughul nobility was the richest community compared to the contemporaries. Their sources of income were from their landed property, war booty, profit from trade, bribery, and gifts from the subordinates. As wealthy persons they adopted pompous lifestyles and spent money generously knowing at after their death their property and wealth would be confiscated by the emperor. Daulat Khan one of the nobles of Akbar's time, left 10 crore gold coins. Gold, silver, diamonds and costly vessels cost 3 crore(57).

Income from Asaf Kan's landed property was 50 lakhs annually. Annual salary of Dara Shikoh was 2 crore 7 lakhs and 50 thousand. Mansabdar of 7000 got annual salary of 30 lakhs besides other income(58). Asaf Khan was a spendthrift. He spent large sums on feasts and presented costly gifts to the emperor and princes(59).

Amir Khan, one of the nobles of Shahjahan's reign had 500 servants and 400 slaves. He had 500 horses and 50 elephants. Dress of his servants was very costly .When he went out, 300 soldiers accompanied him(60). When the German traveler Mendelssohn met him he was the governor of Gujarat. At that time he had 10 crore rupees. When his daughter was married to Shah Shuja, he gave her in dowry 20 elephants, 10 thousand horses and 6 hundred carts full

of equipment(61). As the higher nobility set up such standard of life style, it became difficult for lesser nobility to keep it and as a result they had to take loan to maintain their standard(62).

Bernier writing on the nobility points out that in Delhi there was no middle class. Either there were very rich or very poor. Fruits and meat were expensive and only nobles could afford them(63).

There was always a crowd of people outside the house of nobles. Here people came to seek employment or to complain against minor government officials or to get some financial assistance. As people had access to nobility, they turned towards them for the solution of their problems.

Nobles tried to maintain dignity. In their meeting was Amiri- Tuzuk whose duty was to keep decorum and guide people how to behave. In the meeting nobles used to sit on a throne under an umbrella. When people approached to meet him they presented him nazar and performed kornish- Those who arrived for the meeting were ushered in and properly introduced to the noble. It was customary that all people should sit silently. Nobody was aloud to speak loudly. If somebody wanted to speak, he put handkerchief on his mouth and talked softly. Common people departed after completing their business. Friends left the place when the noble went into the harem(64). If a noble of his rank came, he welcomed him and embraced him. If he wanted to invite some noble, he used to sent troopers to bring him to his place with honour(65). If a noble presented pan to his guest, it was regarded a sign of respect(66). It was also a custom that nobles used to send different dishes and fruits from their kitchen(67).

Whenever, they went out, they were escorted by soldiers and large number of servants. Once A'tiqad Khan went out bare footed without his servants to meet a sufi saint. As it was against the tradition. the emperor reprimanded him on this act(68). Nobles always went out in

procession which consisted of from 200 to 500 soldiers and servants. There were 4 or 5 banners in the procession. They took care of their horses by feeding them butter and sugar(69). It was the duty of servants to clear the road for their procession. If somebody accidentally came on the way, he was beaten up by the servants(70). Servants who accompanied them carried vessels of water, pikdan for spitting pan. A group of servants sprinkled water on road against dust. Some servants carried books and writing material(71). They generally traveled in open or closed palanquins(72).

Nobility of lower ranks constructed their houses with bricks and stones or with mud and perfumed straws. Houses were open and airy. Generally, a garden was attached to them. From inside, they were well furnished and comfortable. Nobility of high ranks used to build their houses on the bank of the river outside the city. The house consisted of a courtyard, garden, water tanks. Inside and outside were fountains. There were underground rooms where they spent time during summer's hot days. Some nobles preferred Kjass khane rather than underground rooms(73). There were many rooms in these single-story houses and in evenings they went to the roof to enjoy fresh air(74).

It was the custom of the nobility to construct houses in every city along with the royal palaces. In the city of Agra their houses were on the bank of river Jumuna. They also built houses at Fathpur Sikri. As Akbar abandoned the city, so did the nobles and there houses turned into ruins. After the death of a noble his children or family members could not have enough money to repair the house and as a result it became dilapidated(75). Inside the house beds were made of gold and silver. In outer portions of the house were separate halls where the noble presided over the meetings early in the morning(76).There were no chairs or tables. The inhabitants of the house used to sit on carpets. To make

them comfortable there were pillows covered with velvet and costly cloth. Walls were decorated by paintings(77). Nobles kept large harems and as a result they had large number of children. However, the first wife had high rank among other wives. All women used to live together. Every wife had a separate room and many servants whose number ranged from 10 to 100. The husband used to give each wife monthly allowance and gave from time to time jewelry and other precious gifts. Their food was supplied from the main kitchen of the house(78). Every night he spent with a wife and it was the duty of the servants to massage his body with perfume and dressed him in new cloths. There were musicians and singers who entertained him with music and songs. Drinking wine was also common. If he liked some beautiful slave girl, he spent the night with her. There were eunuchs in the house to serve every wife(79).

Wives of nobles had all the comforts of life, having best dresses, food, and servants to serve them. But sexually they were not satisfied. That is why, there were rumors about their sexual relationships with eunuchs(80). Some nobles were very fond of women. For example, Mirza Azi Koka had 1500 women from whom he had 4000 children(81). Ismail Quli Khan, a noble of Akbar's time, had 1200 women in his harem. When he went out he sealed the belts of women's dresses(82). Raja Mansingh had 1500 queen. With each woman he had two or three children(83).

The kitchen was the symbol of a noble's status. It was customary for a noble to eat with friends. As there were many dishes daily, expenses of the kitchen were very high. Kitchens supplied food not only to the inmates of haram but also sent to friends as a gift.

It was a custom that before taking meal, all people used to wash hands. After it, dastarkhwan or a clean piece of cloth was spread and different dishes were served. Those in charge of the kitchen sat in the middle to take care of supply of dishes. At the time of meal, all present were

invited to share food(84). When a noble invited somebody, the kitchen in-charge was ordered to make feasts more elaborate. When Saif Khan Safavi invited Khan Jahan Lodi in Gujarat, he made special arrangement for the feast. All vessels were of gold(85). Some nobles had a reputation because of their kitchens.

Raza Bahadur Khidmat Parast was an officer of lower rank during the period of Shahjahan; he had 200 servants and ate his meals along with 50 people(86). Shuja'at Khan, a noble of the Aurangzeb period, used to send food to his subordinates. Besides 200 of his countrymen used to eat twice at his home(87). Some of nobles were famous for overeating. Ab'ul Fadl was reputed to eat 22kg daily. His son Abdul Rahman was the in-charge of the kitchen and observed which dish was liked by his father. If he saw that he did not like any dish, the same was not cooked next day. If any dish was not tasty, he asked his son to eat it. When he was on the adventure to the Deccan, his kitchen cooked one thousand dishes which were distributed among the commanders of his army.

For common people khichri or a mixture of rice and pulsees was cooked(88). Among the nobles of Shahjahan, Asaf Khan, Mirza Abu Sa'id, and Baqar Khan Najm Thani were famous for their fashionable dresses and a penchant for tasty food. A'tiqad Khan, brother of Asaf khan, surpassed them. When he was in Kashmir special rice from Burhanpur and pan came from Kangery(89).

Nobles of high rank used to drink cold water which was made cool by saltpeter(90). Nobles had different types of hobbies. They were ambitious to get name and fame and generously spent money to display their power. To show their devotion to religion, they built mosques, distributed alms, and organized meetings for the recitation of the holy Qur'an. When Shaikh Farid used to go to the court, on his way he distributed dresses, shoes, and blankets to beggars. He also paid annually to widows, orphans, and needy

people. He met the expenses of the girls and boys belonging to the family of the Holy Prophet on their marriage. He awarded roles of honour three times a year to his servants.

His soldiers used to get blankets and shoes once a year. Every day one thousand people used to eat from his kitchen(91).

Islam Khan Chishti was one of the grandsons of Salim Chishti, when he was governor of Bengal, he employed all prostitutes, women singers and dancers and spent 960000 annually. Beside this he gave them silk clothes and jewelry. On his dastarkhwan were thousand trays with different dishes. He himself preferred to eat either millet or barley bread with vegetables(92).

Jahangir Quli Khan was the noble of Jahangir. He employed 200 Haffaz (those who memorize the Qur'an) who accompanied him all the time and recited the holy Qur'an. He was a very cruel man. On simple mistake, and he whipped people and sometime hanged them. He had 100 men whose duty was to play bugle. In the battlefield they performed the duty. Hundreds were employed to kill birds if they dared to fly over his head(93). Sa'id Khan was fond of eunuchs. He kept 1000 handsome eunuchs in his employment. 400 guarded him during the night(94). At Khan Bahadur Zafar's. meetings, the preferred talk was about horses, swords, diamonds, elephants and sexual potency(95). Hakim Sidra had 300 slave girls. Each one of them had a specific duty to perform(96).

Ja'far Khan, the wazir of Auarangzeb, had a delicate nature. He liked costly white clothes. Once the Qazi of Malea was ordered to make finest clothes for him and brought as a gift to him. Ja'far Khan, after seeing the cloth rejected it as it was not as fine and soft as he liked. The Qazi, realizing it, told him that it was to be spread on the floor. His explanation was accepted(97).

Mughul nobles also wanted to be remembered after their death. They built gardens and were mostly buried in them. If they could not build their tombs in their lifetime, their children did it after their death. They spent lot of money on its decoration. That's why, these tombes were a source of entertainment for the people. Their family members employed those who recited the holy Qur'an and distributed cooked food among the poor. On a death anniversary, alms were given to the needy. These expenses were met from the income of the villages. The people normally forgot the crimes of the deceased and remembered only their virtues.

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Chapter 14

Mughul Society

Generally the Mughul society is observed on the basis of grandeur of its court, splendor of its emperors, royal life style of its nobility and its grand monuments. That is why, historians constructed the Mughul era as the golden period of the Indian history.

When we study the cultural activities of the Mughul courts, its etiquette, celebrations, festivals, and granting of awards, and distribution of charity, we get the impression that their rule had achieved pinnacle of cultural sophistication. There is no doubt that its architecture, painting, music, literature, and art of administration distinguished them their contemporaries.

In the traditional narratives of the period, we derive the impression that because of their justice, respect of human values, their subject was happy and prosperous.

The reason that historians constructed Mughul period as a golden age was because they studied only court life and ignore the condition of common people. In the class based society, emperors and nobles had high status in the society while common people had no rights and depended on the patronage and generosity of the ruling classes. Majority of people were unaware of their rights and accepted the hegemony of the rulers without any resistance. They labored hard and provided comfort and luxury to their superiors. They had no role to play in administration or affairs of the state. Contemporary historians emphasized the role of the ruling classes and ignored common people and their contribution to, asking of society. To them

common people were illiterate and ignorant and lived like animal herd. They narrated the role of the ruling classes who displayed bravery in wars, and during peace time spent their wealth in organizing grand feasts and engaged in other cultural activities.

There is a need to study the neglected side of history and try to highlight the role of common people and their contribution to making of history.

Civilization and culture are product of cities. Mughal ruling classes resided in cities where lived artisans and craftsmen who worked for them and accomplished their cultural ambitions and planning. Strength of the ruling classes based on their military power and, if there was any opposition against their authority, it was brutally crushed. To keep people under their control, power and generosity were adopted. There was no mercy in case of resistance and no limit of generosity if they were happy.

Landed property was granted to nobility as jagir which was their major source of income. The revenue which was collected from villages was deposited to the state treasury and welfare of peasants was neglected, Emperors and nobles built their grandeur on the surplus income and distinguished themselves from common classes by possessing this wealth.

Once Mughul Empire consolidated its power, eliminated its rivals, conquered small states and established peace, a new culture emerged as a result of it. In the past, forts were built to defend against enemies, now their character had changed, they were built as royal residence. New buildings were added to accommodate the royal family and the court along with its paraphernalia, palaces, gardens, tombs shrines, and other monuments of this period express beauty, tenderness, and high aesthetic taste which indicate cultural excellence. Dress, food, celebrations, sports, hobbies, and festivals became more elaborate. At this stage, ruling classes required services of those artisans,

craftsmen and experts who produced new and innovative things for them. Especially, cooks who cooked different dishes, and builders who could build magnificent buildings for them were in grant demand. Ruling classes also patronized poets, musicians, historians, calligraphers, and artists who served them and highlighted their generosity and virtues. As a result of this patronage a high culture developed which dazzled people and later generations who remember the past heritage as their own with pride.

There were two parallel cultures of the Mughul era; one of the ruling classes and the other of common people. We do not have enough resources for the popular culture. However, collection material from different sources, we would make an attempt to portray life and condition of common people which bring to light the marginalized section of the society.

Life of common people

In the Mughul city, the residential areas of rich and poor were separate. The palaces of the nobility were either on the back of rivers or in the open part of the city surrounded by high walls and gardens. Houses of poor people were small and situated in congested areas. In some cases two or three families lived together in a house. There were no paved roads and no system of sanitation which made these settlements dirty. Consequently it resulted in diseases. During rainy season, there were epidemic which caused the death of many people as there no arrangement for treatment. As there were no hospitals or medical facilities, poor people resorted for treatment to some spiritual amil or expert to get rid of disease. It caused superstition to prevail in the society.

There were large numbers of people who were unemployed and therefore were ready to work on cheap wages. That was the reason that the nobles and the king could have plenty of servants for their private services.

They also offered their services as soldiers in the army. As there was scarcity of jobs, people tried to serve their master with loyalty. It is evident from history that generation after generation served a family of noble and had a sense of pride on their performance. Their salary was very low. It was customary that the salaries were not paid regularly. As a result of it, their life was spent in poverty and misery. Generally, the salary of servant was from Rs. 3 to 41. Sometimes it was paid in cash and some time in shape of old clothes and used utensils. If their master was influential and powerful, they took advantage of it and exploited common people to get some money from them. On purchasing for their master they took commission from shopkeepers which was called dastoor. With lower wages, it was impossible for them to support their family. In this case the virtue of honesty was not observed(2).

As every noble had a large number of servants, it became a matter of honour and prestige for him to show them in public. It was common scene that these servants ran along with the horse of nobles crying and shouting to people to clear the way for the master.

A noble had keepers for horses, driver for carts, flight bearer, keeper of camels, keeper of elephants, messengers, and umbrella keeper. Messenger had two bells tightened in gridle, when he ran, the ringing of bells warned people of his coming(3). Among the artisans were masons, carpenters, blacksmiths and other craftsmen who worked from morning to dusk. Their daily income was hardly 5 or 6 tanka.

If high government officials required the services of artisans, they were forced to work for them. They were either paid minimum wages or denied any at all(4).

People built their houses with mud with thatched ceiling. The house consisted of one room which had no window. Light and air passed through main door. Floor and walls were plastered with cow dung. There was no

furniture. For eating there were clay plates. There was only one sheet on which the family slept. During winter, fire was made of cow's dung to make room warm. Fire was made in front of the door as there was no ventilation in the room(5).

Poor people ate once in a day. There were few who could afford to have two meals in a day. Main meal was of lunch. Food included butter milk and ghi or purified butter. It was regarded as a source of energy in north India. Yoghurt, cheap sweets, and jaggery were used on special occasions(6).

Salt was very expensive as it was monopolized by the state. Among spices ginger and coriander were used in cooking. Cordoman, cloves, and black peppers were costly and out of the reach of common people. Chillies were not used during Mughul era, Fruits and dry fruits were very expensive. Common people could not to afford to buy them(7). Poor people had no taste for meat. Their favourite dish was khichri which was made palatable by adding purified butter and pickle. Those who could not afford to have a meal in day time, they ate roasted channy or grain(8). There was no wheat in the food of poor man. Rice, millet, barley and pulses were main elements of his dier. He also used vegetables of season(9).

Life and condition of people

The dress of a common man was an unstitched piece of cloth which covered the part of body. In winter, he used woolen shawl to keep him warm. Although, India was famous for its textile industry, yet poor people could not afford to buy its manufactured cloth. Women's dress was sari without blouse. In some part women used blouse and lehnga(10). Generally, people had only one pair of dress(11). Poor people did not wear shoes and walked bare foot(12). Those who could afford, used sandals as a foot wear(13). Poor Hindu and Muslim women did not observe

pardah. They went out from support their families. They worked in the household of nobles to cook food, look after children, and clean the house.

The entertainment of common people was to visit gardens, rivers, and paid homage to shrines. Especially, women visited the shrines; and after paying homage, prayed to fulfill their wishes. Common people also enjoyed jugglers, monkeys, camels and snake tricks and dance. The entertainers wandered from city to city and village to village to provide this cheap entertainment to people. Life in the rural areas was quite uninteresting and dull. If a village could not pay state revenue in case of drought or failure of crop, in this case, officials sold women and children to get the payment. Threatened by officials, peasants fled from villages and took refuge either in forests or mountains. As a result of villages became barren and deserted(14). Because of drought and maladministration peasants suffered and only rarely the state helped them(15).

Rulers and nobles, to alleviate the povery of people, established free kitchen for the poors in cities, towns, and villages. Such free kitchens were opened at Allahabad, Agra, Ahmadabad, Lahore, and Delhi. During famines the number of these free kitchen was increased. There were many severe famines during the Mughul rule which affected the life of common people who migrated to those places where they could get food. It also happened that poor people sold their children in case of starvation. During the rule of Aurangzib, once there was a femine and people came to the capital in serch of food. It created such a crowd that it became difficult to walk in the streets. Rich people distributed charity among poor and destitudes. This act could not eliminate poverty and misery but donors became generous and respectable in society. Povery,

financial problems, pollution, malnutrition, and excess of hard labour reduced the average age of poor people. It was customary to marry early and at the age of 35 to 40 a man was considered old.

Causes of early death among nobility were over eating, excess of sexual activities, and laziness. Therefore, in this society, people achieved whatever they could at up to the age of 30.

People had no political consciousness. They were repeatedly asked to be loyal to the king and endure all oppression and exploitation of ruling classes. To challenge injustices was regarded treason against the ruler. Therefore, those who accept the custom and traditions and lived a life without raising any voice were regarded respectable. Some people took refuge in the teachings of the Sufi saints and retired from the worldly affairs and lived a peaceful life. Instead of resisting evil and brutal rulers, people left it to God to punish the oppressors and to deliver them from their cruelty and injuries.

Centuries of exploitation almost eliminated sentiments to resist and to challenge the system. It was believed that it was the right of rulers and ruling classes to oppress them, and rule over them as their masters. They were not shocked to observe the grandeur and glory of the ruling classes and accepted their subordination without any challenge. As they did not contribute to politics, court historians ignored them and marginalised them as passive element of history. If they were referred in the state chronicles, they were called contemptuously uncivilized and illiterate mob.

During the Mughul reign, the cities were planned so that the residential areas of the rich and poor were located separately. The palaces of the nobility were situated either

by the riverside or in the more open parts of the city, surrounded by high walls and gardens. The houses of poor people were small and located in congested areas where sometimes two or three families lived together in one house.

These settlements were not provided with paved roads or sanitation. Disease was rampant and there were epidemics during the rainy season. There would be many deaths as there were no facilities or hospitals available, leaving the people with no choice but to approach spiritual healers. Hence their lives were spent in superstition, poverty and misery.

Since there were not many opportunities for employment, cheap labour was readily available which was why the king and his noblemen could employ a fleet of servants. Some people would opt for serving the army. Once employed, people worked hard and served their masters with loyalty.

With low wages, it was impossible for the poor to support their families. If their master was influential and powerful, they would take advantage and exploit other people to extort money from them. While purchasing for their master they would resort to dishonesty and take commission from shopkeepers which was called dastoor.

Not many people could afford to have two meals a day. The main meal was at lunchtime consisting of butter milk, clarified butter, yogurt, cheap sweets, and gurr. Salt was very expensive as it was monopolised by the state. Being relatively affordable, ginger and coriander were generally used in cooking. Cardamom, cloves and black pepper, like meat, were costly and out of the reach of the common people. Chilies were used sparingly, fruit and dry fruit were expensive. Khichri, made palatable by adding

clarified butter and pickle was a popular meal. Those who could not even afford a single meal a day would eat roasted gram. Wheat was not included in the diet of the poor man who could only afford to substitute it with coarse rice, millet, barley or pulses.

Women would drape a sari or wear a blouse and a lehnga. Because of poverty, they owned just one piece of attire if it could be called that. Most had no footwear but those who could afford to purchase would wear sandals. The poor Hindu and Muslim women did not observe purdah but cooked, cleaned and looked after the children of the nobles to support their own families.

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Abbreviation
Bibliography

B.M.	British Museum, London
Bibl.Ind.	Bibliotheca Indica
I.O.	India Office Library, London
H.Soc.	Hakluyt Society, London
IC	Islamic Culture
IHQ	Indian Historical Quarterly
IHRC Proc.	Proceedings of the Indian Historical Records Commission
JASB	Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal
JBORS	Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society
JIH	Journal of Indian History
JISOA	Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art
JPH	Journal of the Panjab Historical Society
JAPHS	Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society
JUPHS	Journal of the United Provinces Historical Society

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